

Teen Challenge Update

December 2006

Merry Christmas from Warren's Desk

As we quickly approach the Christmas holiday, all of us at Teen Challenge want to wish you a blessed holiday celebration!

Emmanuel ("God with us") came to earth 2,000 years ago to save us from the power of sin and death. It builds my faith each year at this time to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas. God loves ME so much that before I was born, He provided a Savior. Jesus is not just a baby lying in a manger. He represents countless detailed prophecies delivered through many different individuals over centuries of time. The same power that spoke this universe into existence was displayed in Mary as her child was miraculously conceived. Angels appearing on this earth and a star appearing in the heavens announced the day and place of His birth to common shepherds as well as to kings. Sadly, just as there was no room for Him in the inn, many make no room for Him in their hearts today. This Christmas, let's make it our prayer to welcome Him into our homes, our church pageants, and most importantly, our hearts! May God bless you as you enjoy a Merry Christmas!

Warren



CONTACT INFORMATION

You can reach our Intake Coordinator by email at: info@tcmid.org

Visit our website at: www.tcmid.org

1709 10th St.
Des Moines, IA
50314
515.282.5249

900 N. League Rd.
PO Box 185
Colfax, IA 50054
ph. 515.674.3713
fax. 515.674.4463

2916 N. 58th St.
Omaha, NE 68104
402.551.2322

Leaving a Legacy...

"Alan, I had no idea that things like this were available to me. You have shown me a way to sell a (fill in the blank; property, investments, home, farm, livestock, collectibles, etc.) tax-free, get income off of the proceeds for x number of years (including income paid out to sons and daughters), and then blessing ministry in the end. What a deal!"

This is what I sometimes hear when I tell people about this month's topic. The Charitable Remainder Unitrust (CRUT) and the Charitable Remainder Annuity Trust (CRAT) offer a way to possibly sell something tax-free, generate income for yourself, your spouse, your children (if you so choose), and

then have the remainder of the trust distributed to ministry at the time of your choosing. You get blessed, your family gets blessed, and ministry gets blessed. If you set it up with a lower payout to yourself than the trust is earning, ultimately ministry will end up receiving more than the initial funding of the trust; plus you can set it up where your heirs get the same amount they would have received if they had inherited your estate in a lump sum form.

All these tools are the reason my office exists, and I would love to serve you. Please feel free to call me at (417)693-1445 or e-mail me at alanb@teenchallengeusa.com.

Set Free: A Testimony of God's Saving Grace

I am twenty-seven years old and have been a student in Teen Challenge of the Midlands since February 2006. When I was eight months old my parents were divorced. Growing up I never really had a male influence in my life because my dad left. I had minimal amount of contact with him until I was about eleven years old. About that time I began to become rebellious in school and noncompliant around the house, and my mom didn't know how to put up with a teenage boy. My Father began to come back in the picture. He had met a woman and decided to get married. Both of my parents thought that it would be beneficial for me to go live with my dad in Colorado. This relationship for the next three years would prove to have both pros and cons attached to it. Although it was great for my dad and me to develop a relationship, he also had a severe drinking problem. This would become one of the main reasons I would move back home with my mom to finish high school.

In high school is where I began to start experimenting with drugs recreationally. My friends and I would smoke pot after school and go to parties on the weekends. I noticed early on there was something completely different about the way I desired drugs compared to my friends. They could stop using alcohol and drugs, and I couldn't. Shortly thereafter I started using cocaine and methamphetamines. This would be a demon that would haunt me for the next ten years. Satan deceived me early on by leading me on to believe that drugs and alcohol would take all of the pain in my life away. I became totally engrossed in the lifestyle of "sex, drugs, and rock-n-roll." My life became a whirlwind of sin-related living. The enemy stole my desire to become anything but a drug addict.

By the time I was nineteen years old I had been to my first rehab. This 30-day treatment center did nothing more than provide new connections for me. The unrealistic expectation of staying clean without

a Savior was completely true. Within a couple of weeks I was back to the same behavior. This was one of the first times I started to question if my life would ever change.

In July 2000, God blessed me with the most beautiful gift a person can ask for. He gave me a daughter. I believe she was a gift from God to show me there was more to live for than the lifestyle I was living. It took me six years after that to see how short-sighted my thinking was. I wanted so desperately to be a good father, but there was such a huge hole in my heart that I was trying to fill. No matter how great my desire to be a good father, the selfishness that I lived in always took precedence. My heart broke time and time again as I let my daughter down along with all the people I loved.



In January 2006 I came to the crossroads of life. I didn't want to live anymore, but I didn't want to die. My addictions had alienated me from everybody that I loved. I was dead spiritually. February 3, 2006 I arrived in Colfax, Iowa. I came with nothing more than a physical body and a desire for something more in my life. For the first two months of discipleship I cried a river of tears. God began to shine His holy light on the darkest areas of my life. The enemy had sowed fields of false paradigms in my life that had controlled my thinking and behavior for years.

The Heavenly Father began to instill an identity in me as a child of God. Freedom began to take place in my life in ways I had never dreamed of. Jesus Christ filled the hole in my heart which I had tried to fill with alcohol and drugs. This miracle could never have happened without the vessel of Teen Challenge, and the lives that support and run it. God has given me a burden to sow back into ministry with my life. So many children grow up without all of the elements that God intended. God has become the Father that loves me unconditionally while giving me the discipline in my life to live freely.