

# ESCAPE FROM THE BRIDGE

## YOU HELPED SAVE BEN'S LIFE

As a donor to John 3:16 Mission, have you ever wondered whether your contribution really makes a difference and saves lives?

**Ben** would be the first person to tell you that it does. Your generous gifts, after all, helped to save his life.

A little over a year ago, Ben was living under a bridge in downtown Tulsa. About to turn 40, he had already given up on making anything out of his life. An abusive marriage and alcohol had destroyed any semblance of hope and he found himself living a lifestyle he would never have imagined years earlier.

"I was just done with life. I was done trying. If I was going to die out there, I was ready to go," said Ben.

Sometimes in the evenings, Ben would come to the Mission for a meal, but he never thought about joining the recovery program. Then one night under the bridge a thought occurred to him, "Why not give the Mission a try?"

"To me, that was the spirit of God speaking to me," Ben recalled.

The next day, he came to the Mission and asked if he could join the **New Creation** recovery program. A staff member confronted him with a question that upset him.

"He asked me, 'Why are you here?'" and that made me almost storm out of there," Ben said. "Normally, I would talk back, get angry and be rebellious like I had before, but at that moment, it was like I was glued to my chair. I could feel this weight, like the hand of God on me, holding me down and keeping me there."



*"God has really put it on my heart to work with troubled teens because I know what they're going through. I've been where they are. I can relate and help them," Ben said.*

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Although raised in a supportive, Christian home, Ben had years earlier drifted away from a God honoring life. In the New Creation program, he knew he had a precious second chance.

"I knew the key was just surrendering everything to Christ," Ben said.

One night during chapel service, Ben felt God's presence and immediately he rededicated his life to following Jesus. He hasn't looked back since, even though the path forward has been bumpy at times.

"(God's) the captain and I'm along for the ride," Ben commented. "I know He's with me on my difficult days and my good ones."

Ben has thrived in the **New Creation** recovery program and will be graduating in October. He also is now working for the **Tulsa Boys Home**, a residential facility for troubled teens. Ben has reconciled with family and friends and has rebuilt the bridges that he thought he'd permanently burned down.

"God has truly restored and transformed my life at John 3:16 Mission. I have my family back! I've said it before, at John 3:16 Mission, there's a miracle every day. People's lives are turned around 180 degrees, just like mine.

"I cannot thank you, the donors, enough for what you do. If I could hug each one of you, I would! If I hadn't come to John 3:16 I would still be under a bridge. Or, more likely, I'd be dead. What you provided saved my life!"