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→ **MINISTRY UPDATE** ←

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UPDATE

Happy Thanksgiving! How fast time passes. Seems like yesterday I had children in school. Now it's grandchildren in school. Life moves on whether we are ready for it or not. And as it moves, memories are created, both good and bad. How we handle those memories can and will affect memories of the future.

Dwelling on the past (memories), can let bad memories control the future. And dwelling on good memories can motivate you toward more good memories. Many times, holidays can bring back memories of both good and bad., Bad memories can bring sadness and depression. Good memories can bring peace and love. God has given us a conscience mind to sort out good and bad, and to choose what to do with it. You can't change the past, but you can decide what to do with it.

Mentally healthy people don't forget the past, but realize it was the past, and they live in the now, and plan for the future. An unhealthy mind tends to latch on to the past and dwell there, opening the emotions to depression . Holidays bring

back memories, and for many, depression. Knowing and believing the Word of God can get you moving again in the right direction. Here are some samples:

- A. Phil. 3:13—Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward (forward) ...
- B. Phil. 4:8—Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtue (courage and more excellence), and praise, THINK on these things!!!
- C. Rom. 8:28—And we know that ALL things work together for good to them that love God.
- D. Heb. 2:12—for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, ...
- E. Heb. 13:15—let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of our lips giving a THANKS to his name.

...AND MANY MORE

CHAPEL

So far, we have no donations from outside Hand Up for a chapel. So we are preparing for the winter. We have taken the two tents we used before for vehicle maintenance and for welding; put them together with the small chapel

make a tent big enough to hall all residents at HUM I. Much better than last year. Here are some pictures of the Lord's temple tent at the city dump. (left)



ENEMY **CHALLENGES**

Hand Up has been 501(c)3 tax exempt for 20 years. Our property has been exempt until 2011. Our main park is still exempt. However, when we added the Chandler location and the South Shields (HUM II) location, they refused to give us property exemption at the county level because of who we help. They know we don't have the money yet to make them obey the law. They love to use their power to afflict God's people. Pray for our leaders that they repent and judge rightly, and they obey the law, not make their own. Oklahoma leaders are being judged as they have judged and have brought a curse on this state. Now we have sex offenses every day on the news, and not by previous sex offenders. When leaders sin, it affects everyone under their leadership. Just like parents sins affect their children and grandchildren to the 4th generation. God's laws are sure, just like His grace.

—David Nichols

MY TESTIMONY

My name is Randy Crawford and
This is the continuance of my testimony:



The last time I went to prison I had asked Father to take my life. What I thought I wanted and his purpose for my life were two different things. I used all the resources at my disposal to better myself. However, I was doing it for totally selfish reasons. I know now it was that not only could I be a success, but I would be better equipped to be a beneficial part of the body of Christ. I went to a class where I was told that I would have a place to go when I got out, but that was not meant to be. Mr. Nichols came to Jess Dunn Correctional Center and gave a presentation. After that I went up to say hello, David recognized me, we spoke briefly and he told me to come back to Hand Up. I corresponded with the office on four or five occasions and each time I was denied. I took that to mean I was meant to go to the "Ambassadors for Christ" ministry. Upon my release I went there and there was no place for me there. I found myself on the streets of Tulsa with no job and nowhere to go! I stayed in motel laundry rooms or anywhere else I could stay warm. At night it was about 15 or 20 degrees. It seemed that no one cared and I was on my way back to prison. Each day I got down on my face and prayed for Father to show me where he wanted me to be. After two weeks of this, I had a feeling that I needed to call Hand Up again. I called and Mr. Miller politely informed me that I was still denied but was gracious enough to give me David's cell phone number after telling me that he never overturned their decisions. All seemed lost. After praying, I called. David wanted to know why I wasn't there yet. We did the necessary paperwork and I thought everything was going to be easy from there on. Boy, was that a mistake! My probation officer made me wait the full week to be transferred to Oklahoma City. That was just another ploy by the adversary to cause me problems. I had opportunity after opportunity to get high or drunk. I know that the courage

and strength to stay sober came from the Father. I was utterly incapable of doing any of the things going on in my life on my own. I had thirty-five years of wreckage to verify that. I had no money and no way to get from Tulsa to OKC, once again the Father came though at the last moment. We serve a fourth-quarter God. A God, when there is no way humanly possible, miraculously makes things happen in a way that no man can take credit for.

I called my G-1 sponsor to share my news with him, He picked me up himself and brought me to Hand Up. Again, I thought all my problems were over. What I didn't realize was that my past had followed me. When I was expelled from Hand Up the first time, there were three people who had enough love (and guts) to get in my face and tell me what I was. First was Lou Davis who told me if I didn't quit drinking it was going to kill me. David Nichols really took the time to sit down and explain that I had to want to stay sober and was very compassionate. Carol Barber took a totally different approach, he got right in my face and told me, "if you don't stop that d***** drinking, you're gonna die a mean, bitter, and lonely old drunk." I was furious, and so of course I went and got drunk over it. I never could get that out of my mind, no matter how drunk I got! And so when I returned to Hand Up, I had to prove myself. The first three weeks I was working here, I had to carry all my carpentry tools and lumber in a wheel barrow. Scripture says be responsible with a little and He will give you more. I carried that verse very close to my heart. I was given a car to work out of. I had been involved with the Department of Rehabilitative Services since before I was released. They were a great help; they provided tools, clothing, boots and many other things such as diabetic counseling. My counselor was a great spiritual, mental and emotional support. I became close to my Father and as I did, many more doors were opened for me. I looked for jobs but it seemed no one needed a carpenter that couldn't drive. For a year and a half I worked for the ministry. I

had a lot of depression during that time. I tried to get my drivers license every way I could think of. I wasn't ready, I only thought I was. David hired us a new supervisor and I just couldn't seem to make things work with him. What I didn't realize was that it was time for me to get a job out in the "free" world. Father once again stepped in to intervene. The same day I was fired from maintenance I received a call from a developer in Nichols Hills. I went to work the same week. I was referred to a legal aid attorney regarding my license. Again, Father's plan. My license was suspended in three states, and even four different counties in one of those states, It was going to take a miracle to get that back. After about three months, a letter came in the mail that said all eleven thousand dollars of your fines has been waived, the suspensions have been lifted and all you have to do is pay the reinstatement fees. I just knew there had been a mistake. After all, I haven't had a license in thirteen years. But there was no mistake. We serve an awesome God. I don't tell my God how big my problems are, I tell my problems how big my God is!!! One of my dearest friends stepped in and loaned me the twelve hundred dollars to pay off the reinstatement fees and get insurance, then as if that weren't enough, he loaned me a car. All of these things I tried to do in and of myself to no avail. Time after time when I gave up, Father stepped in and made these things happen according to His plan and timing. He knew when I was truly ready to have these privileges and responsibilities. Along with every privilege comes the responsibility of not abusing that privilege, I never had thought of it that way, The Father illuminated that little fact for me.

I have had Hep-C since about 1997. Recently I was approved for the procedure to cure that but the medicine seems to make me sick. The nurse says that will fade as the virus in my body dies. Glory to God! I'm fifty three now and my body just wont let me do the kind of work I en-

joy. I've been a carpenter for so many years. My abdomen has been bothering me for a long time, so I finally swallowed my pride and told the doctor about it. They referred me to a surgeon who informed me that I have three hernias. He doesn't want to do surgery until I quit smoking cigarettes. I told my case worker about it, and they will help me get my surgery anyway. However, that's my current mountain I have to climb. I experience a lot of pain climbing ladders and scaffolding seems to be a bit too much. I went back to D.R.S. and they accepted me back into their program. I was immediately referred to truck driving school and was accepted back into their program. I start school on November 5th, barring any of the adversaries fiery darts. This is a trade I can retire from, Praise the Lord of Hosts! The Father has done so much for me, I'm in awe every day. For me, it's all about keeping and attitude of gratitude. As long as I'm grateful, not only for the things He has done in my life but for life itself, living in obedience comes easily! For me, pride brings a sense of entitlement which destroys humility and gratefulness. I want to thank Hand Up and David Nichols for believing in me when I didn't even believe in myself, and most of all thank the Father for putting them in my life. Every day is a challenge but as long as I serve Him, I don't fear the outcome. Now I am a part of a family and it feels good to be a part of something that helps so many people.

My name is Randy Crawford and this is my testimony... to be continued...

— *Randy Crawford*

We appreciate all our partners and donors. It is your support that enables us to assist individuals back into society as new brothers and sisters in Christ.

