



## PRAISE REPORT July 3, 2017

As we celebrate our Independence Day, there is a young man who will be celebrating with his family for the first time in two years. Two years that felt like ten! Two years in living hell! His name is Pedro Gonzales and this is his story, in his words.

*"It all started when I got to the Denver Rescue mission, where I met George. I started hanging out with him. I was from Montana, and didn't know where to go, so George told me he would help me. He got me a job with Trojan Labor, and I thought everything would be alright. That did not last long. It all started with verbal abuse and then physical abuse, from throwing me against walls, to throwing me to the ground, and then beating me with his fists.*

*It accelerated to sexual abuse. It started when we were at the Rocky Mountain Motel. He stripped my clothes off, gave me oral sex and then forced me to have sex with him. I called my sister in Idaho and she called the Denver police. They arrested George, but after he was released he found me at the mission. When he threatened to kill me, I once again went with him. The sex and beatings began again, and he had sex with other homeless youth.*

*I've been trying to get away, but he would never let me be alone. He is big and strong and so mean. I've been scared all this time because any day, he could kill me. He has threatened me many times, saying that if I told anyone what was happening, that he would kill me.*

I first met Pedro a year ago, at the Community Center. He was standing by himself. I introduced myself and he was polite, but then left. He would come every now and then, get some clothes and food and then leave, with very little interaction with the other youth.

In the last few months, Pedro started coming with an older man, named George Walls. George was outgoing and friendly, but was always with Pedro. When we lost our building and started holding our programs at Decker Park, they were there much more; again, always together. I occasionally would notice a bruise on Pedro, but he always blamed it on an accident and then would quickly depart. That is when I started to realize that Pedro was being abused. Initially I prayed and internally debated what I should do. If I called the police, Pedro would give them the same story, and they would not be able to do

anything, and Pedro and George would then disappear; move somewhere else. That is when, after much prayer, I decided I needed to befriend George. So I invited him to our programs and allowed them to join us for Wednesday and Sunday meals. It worked, as George began to be more open and friendly. It was so difficult, because I knew Pedro was at risk.

Then GOD intervened. The first change, was that George allowed Pedro to go on a mountain trip last Saturday. Dave Newman, one of our ministry volunteers, spent some time with Pedro on the trip. It was the first time I had seen Pedro smile and actually be excited about life. When we returned to town, Pedro asked if I had any work for him, as he and George hardly had any food. That was the opening I had been waiting for!!! I told him he could work for me Monday. He promptly showed up at our meeting place at 9am, with George, who said he wanted to come also, which I expected would happen. I told him that I only had enough work for one, and that Pedro would be back by 4pm.

Pedro and I then left. We went to a park, far south. I told him that this was not a work day; that this was the day GOD was going to change his life. He had a new bruise by his right eye. I asked him to raise his shirt and there were more bruises. That is when Pedro told me the whole story. First we called his sister. I explained the situation and asked if they would take Pedro back. In tears, she told me that they would always take him back. I then bought a plane ticket to Boise for a 6pm flight. I called Pedro's sister with the flight details and, in tears, she thanked me for giving them their boy back. I told her to thank GOD!!!

At four, as I expected, George called wondering where Pedro was. I told him that I knew everything and that Pedro was going back home to Boise. George made several threats and then hung up.

At 6:30 tonight, after a long prayer and a longer hug, with tears streaming down his face, Pedro boarded his "Flight for Life."

#### **PRAYER REQUESTS:**

- That Pedro will surrender his life to GOD, that he will recover from his abuse, and that he and his family will truly reunite.
- That GOD will protect the ministry and me from any retribution by Patrick.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support.

GOD Bless,

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