



PRAISE REPORT

Sunday, December 18, 2016

I want to introduce you to David Sydow. Charles met him at the ACTC Halfway House, when David attended our Bible Study on Sunday, Dec 18. During the Bible Study, he was quiet, seemed distraught, but finally spoke up near the end of the study. He spoke about losing his wife, when she was hit by a drunk driver six months ago. He also revealed that he and his oldest son had been arguing about GOD. David was amazed that what Charles discussed in this Bible study was exactly what he and his son had been discussing. "GOD" at work, because Charles had never met David until that night!!! After leaving the Bible Study, Charles was very concerned about David, and returned to ACTC the next evening to talk with him.

After an opening prayer, David slowly told Charles his story. David was married to his wife, a Christian woman, at a young age, and they had three sets of twins, each set with one boy and one girl. David had been in the army, doing three tours in the Middle East. On his last tour, he was injured by an IED. He lost part of his intestines, and his legs were injured, and are still a source of constant pain. They were a loving, caring Christian family. While away on military duty, his 5 year old daughter was raped. The rapist was prosecuted and sentenced to a lengthy prison term. Upon his release from the military, with his physical challenges, due to his injuries, the emotional trauma of the rape, and coming back together as a family, David struggled to keep his family together.

At one point, David tried to commit suicide. He put the gun to his head and pulled the trigger. Nothing happened. Then as he pulled the gun away from his head, it fired, and the bullet grazed his head. No matter how much they tried, there was always a sadness that permeated the family. Then one day, as David was driving home from work, he saw the man who had raped his daughter. He couldn't believe that this man had been released less than five years after his daughter's rape. As David watched him strut down the street, he was overcome with grief and anger. Not thinking about his children or the legal consequences, he pushed the accelerator to the floor, and hit his target. He left the scene, thinking he had finally obtained justice, by killing his daughter's rapist. However, he was not dead and managed to get himself to a hospital, where he notified the police. David was eventually arrested and accepted a plea bargain of five years in prison. Six months prior to David's release from prison, his wife was killed by a drunk driver. The mother's elderly parents moved in to take care of the children.

As Charles finished his conversation, David expressed regret that he would not be able to spend Christmas with his children, because he had not been at ACTC long enough to have a pass. In addition, they would not have any gifts, because he had no money.

After the meeting, Charles called me. After relaying this story, Charles asked if Refuge City Ministries could provide a gift for each child. I said YES!!!!, plus I would ask CHCC to help. Charles got permission from ACTC to have a family Christmas party. As we planned for them to have their first family Christmas, there was another tragedy. The oldest son had been very depressed and at one point tried to kill himself with his father's service revolver. It misfired again and the father took it from his son. Unfortunately, one of his son's friends gave him another gun, and he killed himself that night. The family had their first Christmas together in over five years. Though the joy was subdued, it was a new beginning for the family.

Charles has put the family in contact with Brett, one of CHCC's grief counselors. As we begin a new year, I ask that you pray for the Sydow family. GOD BLESS, Skip