



PRAISE REPORT

October 12, 2015

Renewing of the Mind:

When working with the youth at Refuge City Community Center, Burns and Brent Counseling's focus is to try and help each individual change the way he/she thinks. Our hope is that they are able to see they are a gift from God. This can be a daunting task at times, but God opens the door for us to hear some success stories. This is one of those stories.

Cory is a 22-year-old young man. He found himself homeless and detached from his family because of his addiction to Meth. When first meeting this young man, we could see in his face and demeanor how this addiction has taken over his life. Loyce and I (Loyce Burns and Billie Brent) invited the young man to join us in group, but he declined the offer. We let him know that Skip, Loyce and I are here for him if he needs to talk. After this interaction, we did not see this young man for about six months. I went to Refuge City Community Center a week ago on our normally scheduled day and by God's grace Cory was there. He appeared healthy, happy and was very engaged with those around him. I went to speak to him to tell him what I was seeing in him and asked him if he wanted to talk. He eagerly agreed. We sat down and spoke, and he began to tell me a story of renewal and awakening. He reported that his drug use almost killed him.

On his 21st birthday he found himself in a very depressed state and did not care if he lived or died. He purposely shot an extreme amount of Meth into his veins so he could die. Later he woke up in the hospital to see a ring on his finger. As he looked up, he saw his father whom he has not spoken to in a long time. When he overdosed on the drug, the only emergency contact information the hospital had was his parents. As he opened his eyes to see his father standing before him, he stated that this could only be God. His father walked up to him and grabbed his hands and told him, "I put my wedding ring on your finger so you would know me and your mother love you and would do anything for you." As tears welled up in my eyes from his story, he went on to say that at this moment he knew God has given him another chance to get his life right.

When he was discharged from the hospital, he stated that he became dedicated to change the way he thought about life and himself. Not only did he stop using, but he went out and obtained employment, married his girlfriend and got a home to call their own.

He went on to say that he will continue to come back to Refuge City Community Center to tell his story and do anything that he can to help others that are bound down in addiction. He concluded his testimony by stating that Refuge City Community Center is his gateway to talk to people that he would not normally be able to see, and he understands now that it is not about him but how he can help others. Refuge City Community Center is not just a place for homeless youth to go to find clothing, food, and safety; it's a place where youth are able to meet people that can help them change the way they think. Refuge City Ministries helps the youth understand that they are not alone, and if God can renew Cory, He can do the same for them.

Romans 12:2, "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." (NIV)

Billie S. Brent M.A., Registered Psychotherapist

A year earlier, Cory had come to Skip Starr for help. He was fighting a Meth addiction, was living on the streets and didn't have a job. Skip worked with him; helping him find a place to stay, helping him find a job and taking him to Cherry Hills Community Church on Sundays. Cory started to rebuild his life. One Sunday at CHCC, during a baptismal service, Cory answered the call and was baptized. He continued to rebuild his life, until one day Cory didn't go to work and disappeared. After several months, he would occasionally return to the Refuge Community Center. It was obvious he had returned to the life of drugs and sex. Then he disappeared for six months, reappearing on the day Billie saw him. Cory is a walking testimony that GOD never gives up on us and we should never give up on those who are struggling with life.