



PRAISE REPORT

February 11, 2016

Last night I received an unexpected, but very encouraging telephone call from a young man named Todd.

I first met Todd almost two years ago, when he came to the Community Center. He was very small; only five feet tall, and probably didn't weigh more than 100 pounds, dripping wet. He looked like he was thirteen years old. My first impression was that he would not make it in the "survival of the fittest" life of a homeless youth!!

I invited him to our quiet room, so we could talk and get to know each other. Todd was very reserved and not very forth coming but he agreed to play a game with me, one I often use to get the youth to open up about their lives. The youth gets to ask me any question, no matter how personal, and I must answer honestly. Then, I get to ask him a question, and he must answer in the same manner. Slowly, as I was honest about my life, he did the same.

After about thirty minutes, I had learned a great deal. Todd was eighteen years old, a high school graduate and very well spoken. He came from a Christian family, with three younger siblings, and a very domineering father, his parents loved him, but he wanted to be free, to lead his own life.

Over the next two months Todd graduated from the Urban Peak job training program, and had been diligently looking for a job, with no success. One Wednesday in July, he came to the Community Center early, to talk to me. As we talked, he became very emotional. He was very discouraged, feeling that he would never get a job. I knew it was because of his age and his very youthful appearance. He asked me to help him with his job search. I made a couple of phone calls and found a job for him at a nursery, he reported for work that same day. Shortly after he arrived, I received a call from the owner, a friend of mine. He was very skeptical, due primarily to Todd's size. I encouraged him to give Todd a try, and he agreed. That night, he called me back. He told me that if I had any other youths like Todd, to send them his way. He said Todd worked nonstop, did whatever he was asked and never complained.

After Todd's first two weeks at work, he called me, and excitedly explained that he had just received his first paycheck for \$900. I told him not to cash the check, and most definitely not to tell any of the youth at Urban Peak about the check. We agreed to meet the next morning, so I could take him to open a checking account and make a budget for how best to spend and save his money.

That night, at 11pm, I received a telephone call from Urban Peak, informing me that Todd was in the hospital undergoing surgery. I rushed to the hospital, where I learned that Todd had cashed his check and apparently had told some of the youth at the Peak about it. He left the Peak with some of the youth, who then attacked and robbed him. The right side of Todd's face was broken and bruised and his brain had swelled. Two days later, Todd was conscious, and able to write. I visited him and met his parents. Two weeks later, Todd returned home to live with his parents.

I had not heard from Todd since that day. About a month ago, he called to tell me that he had his own apartment, attended college, and had truly accepted Jesus as his Savior. He thanked me and told me he would stop by the Community Center some time. We prayed on the phone before we hung up.

I doubt that I will see or hear from Todd again, that is part of the reality of this ministry. With so many youth, you only have a short time to impact their lives and to introduce them to Christ, before they move on.

**GOD Bless,
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