

Testimony of Redemption

Hello & Happy 2021,

My name is Kenneth Smith. Being a graduate and a current House Manager Intern at the Men's Center of Metro Hope Ministries, I consider

it a blessing to share my testimony with you.

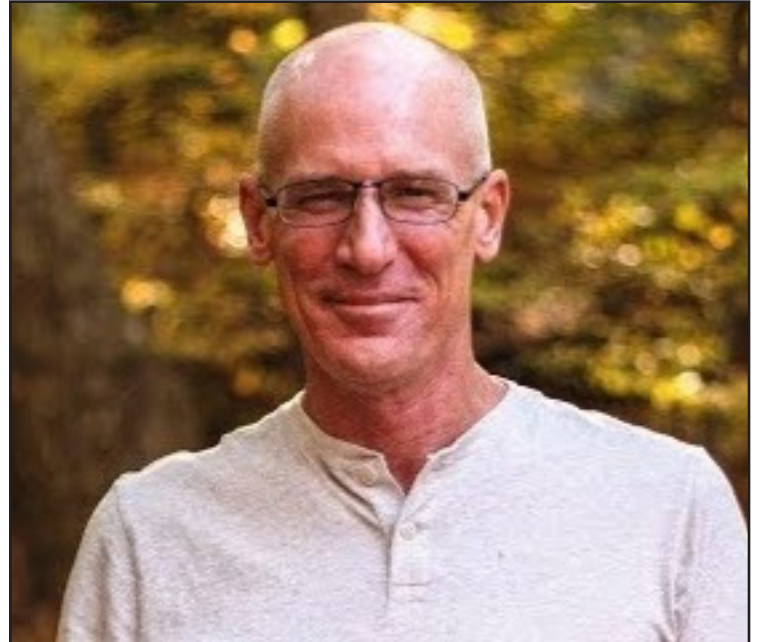
Throughout the years my family used every resource at their disposal to help me, but I could not "get well". The teachers at Metro Hope helped me see that my life without Jesus Christ resulted in unnecessary confusion, addictive behavior, and a peculiar lack of focus.

When I was four years old, I remember being confused, hurt, and full of fear when dad left our household. At that time, it was impossible for me to comprehend the impact it would have later in my life. I missed a father's love that is required daily; I did not receive the necessary teaching and guidance for a young boy growing up in this world. It did not help that mom begin a lifelong battle with breast cancer and that her

second husband Tom, my stepdad, died of brain damage from falling down the stairs of our new home. I was nine at the time; my confusion and fear took to a level that God is still defining today. I needed to feel safe, and whatever light was present in me was fading fast. In the years following, I became a thief, cigarette smoker, drinker, and well on my way to drug addiction. I should include that I fought physically with other students at school regularly. To say that I had problems with anger was an understatement. My mother did not have the strength to bridle me, and I was detached emotionally from my dad's second family. The inevitable happened to this young spiritual boy that chose darkness as my escape. Drugs, alcohol, five felonies on my juvenile record, and no interest in my education were all realities at the age of 14.

My dad tried his best to help me by taking custody of me from my ill mother and moving me out of Chicago to rural Wisconsin. He paid for treatment at three different drug and alcohol rehabilitation facilities, gave numerous financial gifts, and loved me the best way he could. I am 55 years old now, and in hindsight, my dad's help was neither good nor bad; they did not have the intended effect that my dad wished for me. Because of my inability to submit to Christ's infinite love, grace, and power, this black cloud followed me around throughout my adulthood. The world had its way with me, and I was beaten to a pulp trying to survive through the mess without Him. As I look back today, all this was necessary to be the man God wants me to be today.

I walked through the doors of the New Hope Center on January 2, 2020. My journey with the Lord





began just two days later at chapel service. George, our leader, invited us to stay behind after the Chapel and give our lives to the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I took his suggestion, not knowing what I was doing. As I knelt, Jesus Christ revealed to me through my shame what my life had become without Him. The Holy Spirit revealed to me that night that God was my Father, and under His wing, I would have

redemption and be forever safe.

Being with the Ministry throughout 2020 has been like riding the rapids on the Colorado River in springtime. I experience the joy, peace, community, and comfort of Christ's Spirit dwelling in me daily. I see the Father's work more and more as time passes. God supplies me with the wisdom and strength I need to serve the New Hope Center guys with a gentle spirit and encouragement. His limitless Love and Word enables me to be an asset for my family members and give back to the community where I live.

Words cannot describe the magnitude of what our Father provides us at Metro Hope Ministries. It is a safe sanctuary to learn and study His Word and be reunited with the Father forever. I am with the guys 40+ hours a week and see the miracles daily, and I am living proof of The Almighty's handiwork.

I am grateful for all the donors and the men and women who tirelessly serve Christ.

Blessings to you,
Ken Smith