



Once Was Lost...

On behalf of the Hope Rescue Mission Family, I hope you had a blessed Resurrection Sunday celebration, remembering Christ's redeeming work on your behalf! Over 700 different men came through our front doors for help in 2015, and I'd like to share the story of Christ's redeeming work in the life of one of them, John W.

John, now age 58, was a ward of the Commonwealth of PA from birth. He wasn't even given a name when his mother left the hospital after his birth, and he ended up being named after his eventual foster father. He never met his "real" father, and his biological mother battled a lifelong addiction to drugs and alcohol. On John's 16th birthday he met his biological mom for the first time in a bar of all places, and although he saw her from time to time after that, John was never given the love and care from his mother that he craved deep down inside.

The only positive influence in John's life before coming to the Mission were his foster parents, who showed love and support to he and 16 other foster children during the many years they lived at the 600 block of N. 6th St. in Reading – directly across the street from the building where John now resides.

John says his foster parents were a gift from God, and despite the love they showed him, John chose the wrong path. He sold drugs, and led a life of crime and violence. When he was not in jail, he had plenty of money, women, cars, motorcycles, whatever he wanted, all funded by drug money.

Notwithstanding his renegade lifestyle, John still subscribed to certain rules, including never hitting a woman. He had no tolerance for a man who hurt a woman, and when a boyfriend punched one of his daughters in the face and knocked out her tooth, John shot him twice, resulting in a 12 year prison sentence. ***John has been shot, stabbed, and beaten to within an inch of his life.*** He always carried a gun, and was always ready for a rival drug dealer looking to eliminate competition. John has led a hard life, a street life, and he had tried for many years to numb his inner pain through substance abuse.

John came to the Mission in November of 2014, after serving seven years on drug charges. The mother of his children was not willing to take him back, so he fell into homelessness for the first time in his life. Since coming to the Mission, John has been battling serious health issues, and has been in and out of the hospital after having toes amputated from both of his feet due to diabetic complications.

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...now found in Christ!

John fell into a dark pit of depression in August 2015 when his daughter, Angelique, lost her battle with cancer. As John looked back on his painful life, he felt utterly lost. He had no direction, only regret over the life that he lived. That is when John cried out to God for help and forgiveness. **John accepted Christ and has been growing in his new faith through regular Bible study and daily prayer.**

John has no money, no women, no cars, but he says he has never been more content in his life. He doesn't need to carry a gun or look over his shoulder anymore. He's living a simple life, an honest life, and he's trying to convince other men not to follow in his former footsteps by volunteering at the Mission.



John cannot talk about his life without tears streaming down his face. He still has so much regret when he looks back, but he's trying to look toward the future and follow God's plan, whatever that may be. Through a painful journey, John has found something many never find. . . contentment. Contentment in poverty, in humility, and in grace. Contentment in Christ's riches. The nameless baby abandoned in the hospital has been adopted into God's family, and his name is now written in the Book of Life!

Your prayers, in-kind donations, and financial support bless our ministry and allow men like John W., **who once were lost, to be found** by our Savior, our Redeemer, and our Lord!

Robert Turchi
Executive Director

Hope Rescue Mission - 2016 Easter Season Response Form

HFT 04-2016

☐ **COUNT ME IN!** I'd like to help the Men of Hope with a contribution to your day-to-day ministry work of:

☐ \$25.00 ☐ \$50.00 ☐ \$100.00 ☐ \$250.00 ☐ \$500.00 ☐ Other - \$ _____

☐ Please have the Men of Hope pray for the following prayer request: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____ Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Secure donations can also be made online. Go to: www.hopeforreading.org and click the "Donate Now" tab at the top of the page.

We at Hope Rescue Mission rely exclusively upon private donations since we neither seek, nor accept public funding of any kind. Your financial resources are applied directly to the operation of the Mission and helping homeless men in need physically, emotionally and spiritually. May God bless you for your support!