

When I Lost Granddad, I Lost Me

by James



I never had to deal with somebody dying before, especially somebody I loved. My granddad was my best friend. He took me everywhere with him, and we always did everything together—fed the chickens, planted the garden, everything. And it wasn't just me, *everybody* loved him. Everybody in our town respected him. I was so proud when folks would walk past my granddad's porch, waving and calling out his name.

I was 22 when he passed away. It hurt me real bad, and I couldn't get over it. I missed him every day. That's why I started drinking, just trying to take that pain away. But it wasn't long before I was drinking up to a gallon of vodka or gin a week. Then I started in with the crack and meth. My life just got worse and worse, and the worse it got, the more I had to drink and drug myself to deal with it all. Thing is, I thought I was taking all that pain away, but all it did is put even *more* pain inside me.

I lost so much weight you could see through me. Then I got diabetes and my health got bad. But worst of all, I have a wife, eight kids, and nine grandkids—and I hurt

them all because of the terrible way I was living. My wife and kids finally told me I had to do something. My baby girl begged me to get help, because she didn't want to lose me like I lost my granddad.

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When I came to Waterfront Mission, it was the first time I talked to someone about losing my granddad. I cried then, and I'm still crying—not just over losing him, but over everything I did to my life and my family. But I'm starting to realize how much God loves me, and I'm slowly letting Him heal me so I never go back to drinking.

Thank you for supporting Waterfront Mission. If it wasn't for you, I'd still be out there acting like a fool. Thank you for saving my life.

• Waterfront Rescue Mission offers homeless rescue services, including overnight shelter, 24/7. While intake in Waterfront's Recovery & Career Development Program is suspended until sometime in 2021, graduates are highlighted in this issue to showcase transformed lives. Career Development clients currently reside in Waterfront transitional houses, as they go to work daily and save for housing of their own.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thanksgiving & Christmas volunteers:

Due to Covid-19, we will not engage volunteers for the holidays.

Please pray for those we serve, and we will also pray for you.

ITEMS NEEDED FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Holiday Donation Needs:

- Turkeys (10-12 lbs)
- Hams (10-12 lbs)
- Stuffing mix
- Large cans of green beans and corn
- Pies or cookies
- Cranberry sauce
- Gift cards to grocery stores

Other Needs:

- Razors
- Deodorant
- Travel-size toiletries
- Men's T-shirts, underwear, and socks
- Blankets
- Warm clothes
- Jackets
- Gloves
- Knit hats



A Message from

Rick Fisher

Director of Waterfront Mission in Mobile

"As we enter this holy season of the year, I have so much to be grateful for."

Dear Friend,

The holiday season is finally almost upon us. It's been a long year of COVID-19, unemployment, economic challenges, social distancing, turmoil in the streets, and fear. At times, I think we've all been tempted to lose hope. But now, on the brink of Thanksgiving and Christmas, I don't see the darkness of the past several months. I see the brightness of God's love and faithfulness. After all, God is still on His throne.

Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 5:18: "Give thanks in *all* circumstances, because this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." And as we enter this holy season of the year, I have *so much* to be grateful for.

This year, in the face of overwhelming hardship, I've seen extraordinary acts of sacrificial kindness from volunteers. I've witnessed former clients, who we once served here, come *back* to make sure we have everything we need to care for others. The served have become the servants. I've watched as staff courageously set aside their own fears, rolled up their sleeves, and did whatever had to be done to keep ministering.

This holiday season, I see the fingerprints of God

But most of all, I've seen this community, including caring people like you, rise up to support Waterfront Mission and make sure that people, who otherwise might be forgotten, are *not* forgotten. All year long, I've watched in awe, as you determined to give and serve hurting people despite the challenging circumstances we see around us. We've never lacked food, financial gifts, or volunteers. Throughout it all, you prayed and wrote us notes of encouragement. In fact, I get goose bumps even as I write this, thinking of you.

This holiday season has God's fingerprints all over it—and those fingerprints are you.

Blessings,

Rick Fisher, Director



GIVE THE LIFE-CHANGING GIFTS OF HOPE

Christmas is all about love. It's about God loving people like you and me through the gift of His Son. But it's also about love for our families, friends, and neighbors. Your gifts to Waterfront Rescue Mission reflect that kind of love as you help provide those who are hungry and homeless with critical food, clothing, and safe shelter.

But there's more. Your gifts invite hurting people to experience Christ's life-changing love for themselves. Thank you for loving and

In the spirit of this holy season of giving, we encourage you once again to give a donation who come through our doors. Please use the response slip in this newsletter, or you can contact us directly. Thank you for all you do on behalf of people in need!

NEVER FEAR

by Jack

Fear was always a big thing with me. Fear of striking out, fear of failing an exam, fear of interviewing, fear of something—anything—going wrong. I struggled with self-doubt in every part of my life. Except when I drank or used drugs.

In high school, I discovered that alcohol helped give me a little more confidence. Then, in college, I added cocaine to the mix. It gave me energy, a sense of power, the belief that I could do *anything*—and I loved it.

I graduated with a degree in business and started working. But I brought my addictions with me. Two years later, drugs and alcohol cost me that job. Then I lost another one. Failed a drug test for a third. And by the time I lost my fourth and fifth jobs, I had also lost whatever self-esteem and dignity I had left. Fear reached a whole new level in me. But I still had my drugs and alcohol. I was so consumed with my failures, I thought *why even bother anymore*.

“I was so consumed with my failures, I thought *why even bother anymore*.”

Then I managed to get myself arrested. I hit rock bottom. Sitting in jail, though, that's when I finally turned to God and started praying. I asked him to help me become the man I'm supposed to be. I wanted that peace only he could give me.



After I left jail, I came to Waterfront Mission. I immediately knew I was going to be OK. It's like God said, "Just give me all your failures, all your doubts and self-loathing, and all your fears. Trust me, I got you." I've been here over a year now, and God has proved his faithfulness every step of the way. He used Waterfront Mission—and folks like you—to completely deliver me, not only from drugs and alcohol, but from all my fears.

Today, God is opening doors up everywhere in my life. I even have a job and the trust of my family back. **Thank you for everything you've done for me.**

AND NEW LIFE THIS CHRISTMAS!

caring for precious men, women, and children at Waterfront Rescue Mission this holiday season and throughout the year.

Your love can change a life today—and for eternity

Love transforms lives. And that's never more true than at Christmas. As we enter this holy season, so many of our struggling neighbors need meals, shelter, long-term care—and, yes, a love that will change their lives today and for eternity.

Contribution of any amount to help lessen the suffering and pain of those in need can be made online at waterfrontmission.org.

“Love transforms lives. And that's never more true than during Christmas.”

These Special Volunteers Care at Christmas



Every Christmas, Morgan Ashurst and Slade McLendon co-lead a group of 30 dads and sons to Waterfront Mission to pass out gifts, cards, prayers, and love to guests of the annual Christmas Day feast at Waterfront.

“A couple of weeks before Christmas, we get together to wrap little gifts, like chocolates and candy canes, and we create special cards to remind them we’re praying for them,” Morgan says. “Then we hand them out on



Christmas day. It’s a pretty simple thing to do to remind these other dads that we love them, and that through Jesus Christ, they can accomplish anything. Serving at Waterfront Mission has changed our families’ lives and helped us build a more solid foundation for our faith.”

Those of us at Waterfront Mission salute the faithful and compassionate witness of these special fathers and sons.



Thanksgiving!



MY CHRISTMAS GIFT

YES, RICK, I WANT TO HELP HURTING AND HOMELESS NEIGHBORS TODAY AND THROUGH THE COMING HOLIDAY SEASON.

Here's my Christmas gift of:

- \$21.70** to provide **10** meals and other assistance
 - \$32.55** to provide **15** meals and other assistance
 - \$65.10** to provide **30** meals and other assistance
 - \$_____** to provide as many meals and as much care as possible
- Please bill my credit card:
 VISA MC AMEX DISCOVER

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ACCOUNT NO. _____ EXP. DATE _____

NAME _____ SIGNATURE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

Waterfront Mission (Mobile Campus)

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 Mobile, AL 36633

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