

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." Matthew 28:19-20



# CHRIST SATISFIES

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"Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world – the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does – comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever." (1John2:15-17)

## NEW HOPE IS EVERYTHING

Pulling the van up to a young man this past summer and asking him the salvation questions – "If you died right now, would you go to heaven or hell?" "If God asked you why he should let you into His Kingdom what would you say?" was the start of James' relationship with a young man we'll call B\*.

This line of questioning led to a conversation where James was able to share the full gospel. The end result? A broken repentance? New birth on the spot? No, B was frightened by James' zealous excitement about the Savior. Thinking he was a "religious freak" B was on his way. In the weeks and months that followed he proceeded to laugh at James as he manned the Christ Satisfies Ministries table, which used to be at the corner of Knox Ave. N. and 26<sup>th</sup> Ave. N., handing out Bibles and tracts.

If the story ended there we might be discouraged but God with His incredible timing and amazing sense of humor was not finished with these purposeful encounters.

A number of weeks later they met again at the West Metro Recovery Center in Robbinsdale. James had been invited there to teach some Bible studies and

lead some Sunday morning worship services. Next, B attended a few of the Tuesday night community Bible studies though he was continuing to dabble in the world.

When B finished the West Metro program he was homeless. He took to the streets reconnecting with his gang and drug cohorts, sleeping in hallways and anywhere he could. Initially, he maintained contact with James by coming to the Tuesday night study. James also spent some time with him outside of the study, gave him rides to the day labor employment office and brought him over to clean up and do some laundry. But, eventually he disappeared sinking back into the pit of despair the streets had to offer.

Then, just before Thanksgiving, James spotted him again as he was evangelizing around the community. Turns out B was high and on his way to sell some drugs. Needless to say, he wasn't too interested in a reunion with James. In his words, he "blew him off" and continued on with his business.

However the Lord used this encounter. B thought what he did was wrong. The following day James' words continued to haunt him. As B put it, he thought, "this brother loves me."

*Christ Satisfies Ministries is a non-profit project of Congressional District Programs*

He proceeded to come to our house and sit on our front steps waiting for James to arrive home. It was the day before Thanksgiving. When he drove up they talked, and James took him to the hospital so that he could enter a detox. God answered prayers and gave him victory over his flesh enabling B to wait at the hospital all night. In the end, he was unable to obtain help there because his struggle was with drugs not alcohol. He called us on Thanksgiving as we were driving to our friend, Dan Bradley's home for turkey dinner. They went and got him. He joined us for dinner and slept at our house that night. Through Dan's connections in the recovery ministry world he was able to enter the New Hope Recovery Program, a Christian-based rehab that brings men through an intense, four-month, Bible saturated program for overcoming addictions.

He has been there now for two months, is clean and growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. With a new heart and a new hope, his only hope, he rejoices in the knowledge that, "God is my everything, man!"

This wasn't always B's battle cry. Originally from Atlanta, GA, drugs, gangs and violence have characterized his life. Never knowing his father, his early years were somewhat stable with his mom, step dad and siblings. At 12 the family moved to Chicago for a couple of years and then onto Minnesota when B was 14. His mom and step dad separated and life took a major turn for the worse. Mom would disappear into a room in the house where they were living day in and day out for months. He and the other children were not spending any time with her. In fact, the younger kids were not being properly cared for. Finally, after two months B figured out what was going on. He found the paraphernalia – mom was smoking crack. That is what she and her friends would do all day and night in the room. Realizing that any money coming in was going to purchase crack cocaine and his younger brother and sister were neglected motivated B to get a job selling candy door-to-door in order to provide for some of their needs.

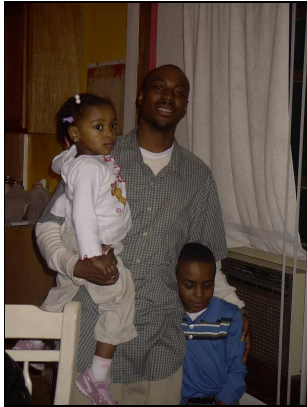
Around this same time B met a man who offered to give him a cut of the money for selling some of this man's drugs. Now he was fairly enmeshed in the drug world. He himself had first sniffed coke back in Atlanta at age 11. He began selling to his mom's friends. After his money was stolen and mom suddenly showed up with cash and drugs, he moved out on his own.

By this time, 15, he was part of a gang. The initiation was to walk through a line of fellow gang members getting beaten as he went along. At the end of the line they all jumped him and beat him up. When finished the same guys came around and hugged him welcoming him in as a family member.

He continued to sell dope at this time eventually adding car theft and gangbanging to his roster of criminal activity. He attempted to move "home" with his mom when he was 17. Her boyfriend punched him in the face. B left and returned with some of his gang friends to retaliate, but the boyfriend used B's mom as a shield. The violence in his life escalated as his involvement with the gang continued. Fights and gun activity were regular events. He was ambushed by rivals and shot at but mercifully spared. A friend of his didn't fare as well in God's providence. As he stood next to B at a party, a rival gang member shot him in the chest. Once when B was about 18 another gang kidnapped him. They stole his money and drugs, dropped him off somewhere and told him to run lest he get shot. Later the same day, the kidnappers showed up at his gang's hangout. B and some other guys went to their gun stash, got some weapons and proceeded to avenge the earlier deed. One of the kidnappers was shot with a rifle and the other two were chased down and severely beaten. This crime landed B in prison for 4 years in St. Cloud for aggravated assault.

Until the time of his arrest and imprisonment he would occasionally see his mom and his younger brother and sister. That ended when his mom who was a drug addict got pregnant. When the baby girl was born she had drugs in her system. The state authorities took the baby and his other sister from the home. His brother, who had a different father than B, went to live with his dad.

Upon his release from prison, B returned to his familiar world of the gangs, drugs and crime. This time he eventually became a full-blown crack addict. This bondage to drugs has held him hostage for the past six years. Praise the Lord for His redeeming, heart-changing, life changing work! B has been clean since Thanksgiving and is thriving at the New Hope program mentioned earlier.



Christmas Day with the kids

When B was 25 he met a young woman. In his words, she was a “goody-goody” and he was a hardcore criminal. Eventually their relationship led to a pregnancy. She planned to abort the baby but the Lord intervened through B’s challenging words, “Are you going to kill my baby?” They have two children, a boy and a girl, as the result of their on-again-off-again relationship. The children currently live with their mom. She professes Christ and though they were never married, B is hopeful that one day the Lord might bless him with the gift of marriage and a family that is living to honor Jesus.

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” Nowadays B is peaceful, content, appreciative of God’s blessings and thankful for people. He desires to keep God first in his life, continue in fellowship with his brothers in Christ and have consistent victory in his spiritual battles through prayer. He pleads with God to continue to

change him. B desires to be a genuine, growing disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. Please pray for him as he undertakes this new life to which the Lord has called him.

## TABLE TRIUMPHS & TRIBULATIONS

*“Those  
who sow  
in tears  
will reap  
with  
songs of  
joy. He  
who goes  
out  
weeping,  
carrying  
seed to  
sow, will  
return  
with  
songs of  
joy,  
carrying  
sheaves  
with  
him.”  
Psalm  
126:5-6*

The Lord has created an opportunity for James to set up a table again and distribute words from the Lord, Bibles, godly books and other evangelistic material. Twice a week he’s at a gas station/store on the corner of Penn Ave. N. and 26<sup>th</sup> Ave. N. with his godly arsenal.

Crime, which you know is rampant in north Minneapolis if you’ve been a reader of our updates, is no stranger to this corner. In fact, since the store across from our house where James originally had the table closed this past summer, much of the drug traffic and other activity that took place there has relocated five blocks east to Penn. Drug dealers/gang members and prostitutes vie for space to trade their wares; the harvest is definitely plentiful.

He has only been there for a couple of weeks and already it has been both an encouragement and a challenge. Several times our dear brother, Howard, has joined him at the table. He has a gang/drug background, which the Lord uses in a great way as Howard seeks to share truth with those who were formerly his peers.

Of course, the last place Satan wants a success is here among these hardened, young people. He has thrown down the

gauntlet for the spiritual warfare to begin. On his third time out at this new location, the enemy clearly was trying to drive James away.

After some initial, cordial greetings with the guys who are regulars hanging at the station store and twenty minutes of distributing words from the Lord, a man about 30 years old rode his bike into the station lot, spoke with the gang guys and seemingly bought some dope. Then he came over to the table where James sat and threw his bike down in front of it. James greeted him and offered him a word from the Lord. The man harshly refused and went into the store.

Moments later he returned to the table, took the empty chair that was next to James, moved it about five feet away from him and sat down. He proceeded to lay a magazine on his lap that was covered with pot and roll a joint.

Once more James said, “Hello.” This time he asked the man whether or not he had heard what it takes to get into heaven. In a deep, piercing voice the man loudly screamed, “Jesus got f\*\*\*ed!!” God mercifully gave James much grace to remain composed and fixed on Him in this rather terrifying moment. “That could

be a way of describing what happened to Him," James remarked. Moments later as he continued rolling his joint a bloodcurdling voice emanated from this man as he screamed, "His Father f\*\*\*ed Him."

Again, the Lord quieted James' heart, comforted Him through the Spirit and His Word (Ps. 27:1-3) and enabled him to maintain his composure. Then the man got up, picked up his bike and rode off. James remarked that it had been nice meeting him as he left.

He knew that the man, the dealers and Satan were trying to terrify and intimidate him, but God supplied the grace sufficient for the day as He promises. James was able not to display fear, but to show love toward them. This was clearly a display of the Lord's

mighty power. "Because he loves me," says the LORD, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name." (Ps. 91:14)

Twenty minutes later two of the guys who were part of the group originally talking to the screaming man walked by the table. James asked if they would like a word from the Lord. Both of them stopped, turned around and took one. One of them with a rather amazed look on his face uttered in a low voice, "Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Father," and walked away.

Please pray for a miracle here in north Minneapolis. Pray that God would work in the hearts of many even bringing a revival! As you can see evil, crime, and violence are commonplace in our community.

Tonight, as I left the house to visit the coffee shop and write I turned to see about eight Minneapolis police officers exiting a house approximately fifty feet away from ours armed with shotguns and what appeared to be SWAT gear. Apparently there was some type of raid on another gang/drug house. Last year ended with Minneapolis Police Department statistics for the northside showing 28 murders, 120 rapes, 861 assaults . . . the list goes on. This year opened with the city's first murder occurring New Year's Day on the northside. As of this writing the count has risen to three in our community. "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." (Mt. 10:37-38) We covet your prayers for us.

## SHARING GOD'S INDESCRIBABLE GIFT

Amid the season of twinkling lights, fragrant pine trees, homebaked cookies and glittering packages that the world calls "Christmas" revolves another world of people, the homeless, whose holiday thoughts are not filled with strains of "I'll Be Home for Christmas." In fact, to many December 25<sup>th</sup> is no different than any other day, one in which foraging for shelter from the elements, food and money for essentials coupled with concerns about safety is the primary preoccupation.

With this backdrop the message of hope that Christmas truly reflects: Christ's incarnation, his birth to an ordinary young virgin in a most extraordinary manner facilitated by the Holy Spirit, to

free us from sin and restore our fellowship with God through His sacrificial death and resurrection is sometimes overlooked.



**The CSM  
Assembly Line**

We were blessed to minister to some of our city's homeless on Saturday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>. Armed with black trash bags filled with a blanket, hat, gloves, socks, toiletries, some sweets, a Bible and tracts that shared the

true meaning of Christmas, James and our dear brother, Howard went downtown to find some needy recipients. It didn't take long for them to come upon men and women who were on the streets and in need.

In fact, they were even able to utilize James' medical assistant training when they encountered two men near the Basilica of St. Mary. One had an ulcerated foot that was in need of some wound care. James and Howard got some first aid supplies and proceeded to minister to this man's foot. The afternoon outreach provided a number of opportunities to minister hurting, needy people and to share with them the most prized Christmas gift, Jesus.

### CONTACT THE MULLEN FAMILY

Christ Satisfies Ministries, P.O. Box 11954, Minneapolis, MN 55411  
612-522-4320, jamforChrist@msn.com

