



OPEN DOOR MISSION

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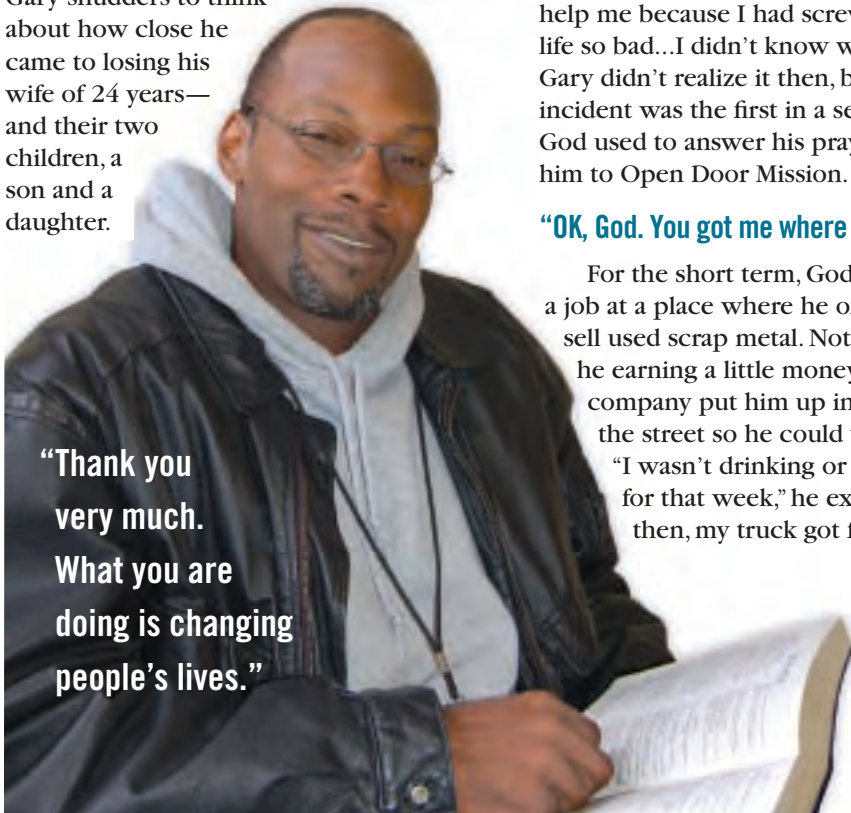
Your Generosity At Work!

GRIEF PLUNGED GARY INTO A PIT OF DESPAIR...

Your compassion helped set him free

It still pains Gary to think about that dreadful night back in 1999. His mother, seriously ill, had a dream of going on a cruise. So Gary, along with his aunts, made her dream come true. Out at sea, Gary's mom died late one night, leaving him shocked and devastated. "I went and found two bottles of Crown Royal and disappeared on the boat," he recalls. "That's when I made my deal with the devil."

Life goes on. But Gary, who dearly loved his mom, felt empty. His grief drove him back to using cocaine—a habit he had previously overcome. "I realize now I was just trying to cover up my pain," he says. "And I didn't want to deal with my feelings. I just kind of gave up on caring about what anybody else wanted." Today, Gary shudders to think about how close he came to losing his wife of 24 years—and their two children, a son and a daughter.



"Thank you very much. What you are doing is changing people's lives."

A life filled with "stuff," but empty inside

A pipe fitter by trade, Gary made a good living. With the extra wages his wife earned as a nurse's assistant, they were doing well. "We had the two-story house on the corner with the dogs in the back yard," says Gary. "All the stuff you're supposed to want, right?" But Gary was empty inside. "I was trying to fill up the hole in me and cover up the pain with drugs and alcohol." It didn't work. Gary lost the house, his job, almost everything.

One day, needing money, Gary rented out his truck to someone who didn't return it. Suddenly, as he says, "I found myself wandering on the side of the street...I was walking from one side of town to the next. I just threw my hands up in the air and asked God to come and help me because I had screwed up my life so bad...I didn't know what to do." Gary didn't realize it then, but the truck incident was the first in a series of events God used to answer his prayer and bring him to Open Door Mission.

"OK, God. You got me where you want me!"

For the short term, God gave Gary a job at a place where he often went to sell used scrap metal. Not only was he earning a little money, but the company put him up in a motel down the street so he could walk to work.

"I wasn't drinking or using drugs for that week," he explains. "But then, my truck got found...as soon

as I got the truck back, I got something to drink. I got some drugs. I was going right back from where I just came from."

Gary recalls how the Holy Spirit helped him "catch myself." He knew in his heart he had to get help immediately. It was a Saturday and he had spent all his new wages on drugs and alcohol. Gary was hungry and had heard about Open Door Mission. He got in his truck and came over. "I was just going to get something to eat," he says. "I didn't plan on staying." But on his way out, Gary ran into an old high school friend who told him about the DoorWay Program. "I didn't want to stay," he says. But when he cranked up his truck this time, it wouldn't start! "OK, God," laughed Gary. "You got me where you want me. I'm going to stay."

Today Gary's very glad that his truck wouldn't start that day. "The more I learn about God, the more I learn about me," he says. "He's restoring my self-confidence. He's restoring my family. And He's restoring my hope."

GOOD NEWS *inside...*



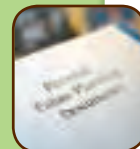
"I'm starting over now!"

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MY VIEW

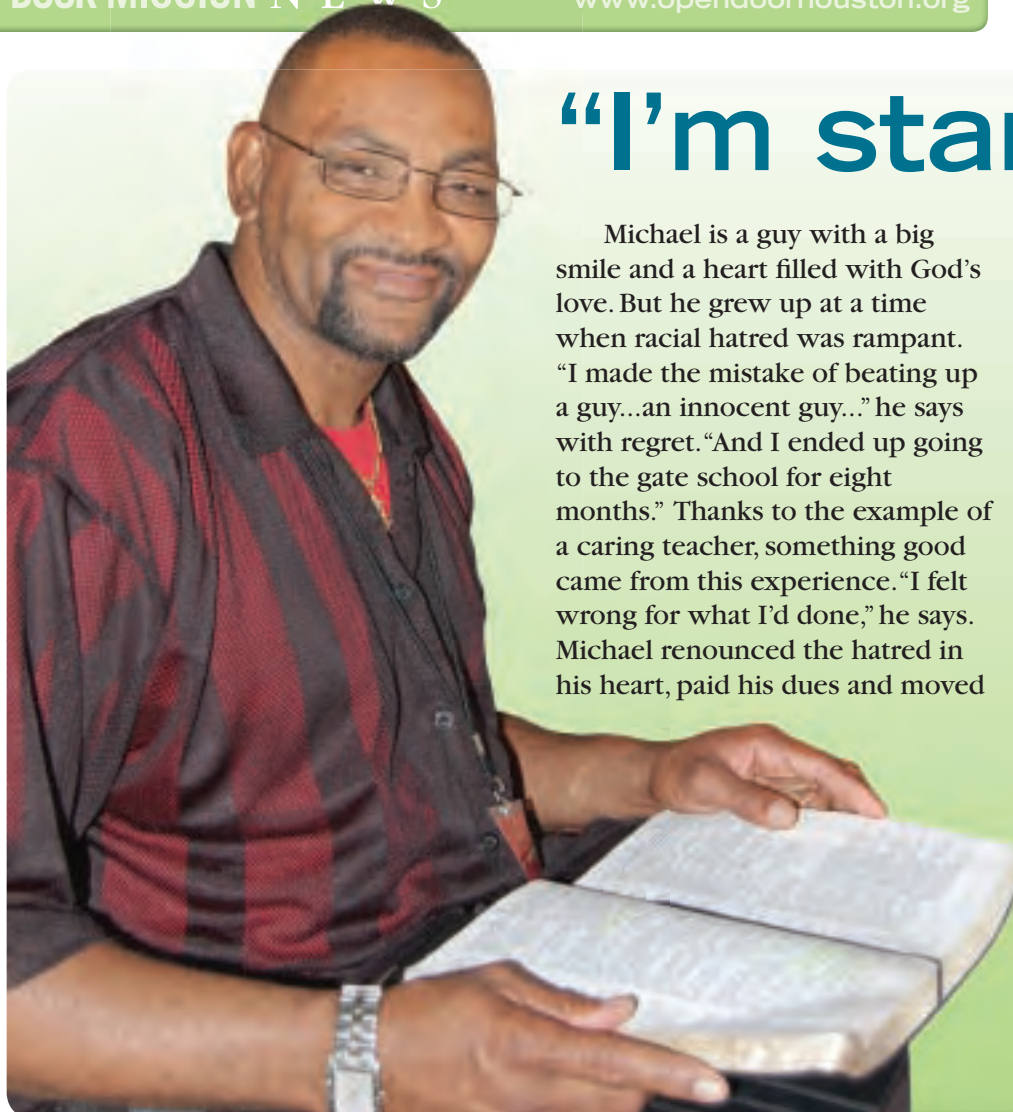
A Message from
Rick Hill

What's new at Open Door Mission? For starters, lives are changing here. I can't think of any better news than that! Day after day, more and more men are coming to our Mission—homeless, hungry and shattered by problems that seem to swallow them whole. Often, due to crippling addictions, they are burdened with intense feelings of failure and self-hatred. Sounds pretty desperate, doesn't it? But here at Open Door Mission, they find God's "prescription" for recovery. It can be summed up in one powerful little word... hope.

When a man hits rock bottom, hope is the first step up. Hope lights the way through the darkest valley of the shadow. And hope can turn the most heartbreaking tragedy into a triumphant victory. The most precious gift you offer through your support of Open Door Mission is hope. This is the key to new life—and the men you'll meet in this newsletter are living proof. May God bless you for making a difference for them—and for so many others, too.

Richard H. Hill, Jr.

Richard H. Hill, Jr.
Executive Director



"I'm starting over now!"

Michael is a guy with a big smile and a heart filled with God's love. But he grew up at a time when racial hatred was rampant. "I made the mistake of beating up a guy...an innocent guy..." he says with regret. "And I ended up going to the gate school for eight months." Thanks to the example of a caring teacher, something good came from this experience. "I felt wrong for what I'd done," he says. Michael renounced the hatred in his heart, paid his dues and moved

on. He started his own auto repair business, and for a while, did well. But around the age of 27, Michael started hanging out with guys who were using cocaine. "It was something that I just wanted to try," he says. Michael didn't like cocaine at first. But later, when his wife and other relatives were using it, he got hooked. Soon Michael was committing crimes to get crack.

One day in a prison cell, Michael found a Bible on his bed. That's when he opened God's Word for the first time. "I cried like a baby," he says. "From that point on I believed." But the road back was rocky. Married to an addict, there were many problems and setbacks before Michael hit rock bottom. He even came to Open Door Mission for a month, and left prematurely. "I wasn't trusting in

God, I was trusting in me," he says. Again Michael ended up in jail. Once more he drew close to God. Despite this however, his habits were hard to break and he relapsed into his old ways. With his marriage in shambles he returned to our Mission. "I knew that this was the place God wanted me to be," he says. And he hasn't looked back.

Michael opened the Bible for the first time in a jail cell. "From that point on, I believed," he says.

Michael would like to thank you...

Michael knows that Open Door Mission wouldn't be here without the generous support of friends like you. He'd like to thank you for helping to change his life. "The classes are great...we learn so much about the Lord, and how to stay on track and how to apply it," he says. The program really works!

"You will have courage because you will have hope."

—Job 11:18, LB



Volunteers needed for...

"My Story" Journaling Class

Volunteer Gerry Vander-Lyn created the innovative **My Story** journaling class for the Open Door Mission. Men at the Mission are finding remarkable healing through writing. Gerry helps them write about their lives in a pressure-free environment. An avid journal writer herself, Gerry understands the benefits of documenting one's story. After pursuing studies about the healing values of writing, she decided to explore this innovative idea, which has quickly proven itself in positive results. We would like to expand the **My Story** class so that all 180 men have the opportunity to reap the rewards of journaling, but we need help! **To volunteer or for more information, please contact Gerry at (713) 923-7478.**



congratulations

Todd

When Todd went through a divorce, a friend introduced him to cocaine. He owned a car detail shop and was making good money, but drugs soon took over. An accident with his van caused



Todd to admit to his mom that he needed help. Together they found our website. In the program, it was hard not to "be the boss" any more, but gradually Todd surrendered all to Christ. "My walk is the way it should be now," he says. Todd has completed the program, and is in the job search process. He wants to thank you for helping to give him a second chance!

Tommy

Tommy battled alcoholism for 36 years. He had been through a different program, suffered a relapse and was living on the streets when a Christian friend brought him to Open Door Mission. A graduate of the DoorWay program, Tommy is currently in the Disciple Partners program while he gets back on his feet. He plans to stay connected through our Alumni network, and is very grateful for your support of our Mission. "It's not about just saving me from being homeless," he says. "It's about love."



Please join us in congratulating Tommy and Todd, recent graduates of the DoorWay Program. These men are grateful for your generous support that helped give them a fresh start—and they appreciate your prayers as they begin their new lives.

Your Will Won't Work When...

1 It's Out-of-Date

How old is your will? Have you reviewed it in the last three years? If not, chances are it could use some attention. A number of personal factors can affect your will: things like changes in income, employment, family size or marital status. External factors such as new federal or state laws can also require the revision of your will. Have any of the following things occurred in the last few years?

- Move to another state
- Marriage or divorce
- Trustee or executor can't serve
- More grandchildren
- Change in giving interests

2 It's Legally Invalid

This is more likely to be true if your will is old, or if you tried to cut corners by using generic forms from a stationery store. A will can be invalid if it is unsigned or witnessed improperly. There's no substitute for having a competent attorney involved.

3 It Conflicts With Other Plan

Your will should be coordinated with your other estate transfer documents. For example, insurance proceeds and brokerage accounts pass outside the will to the named beneficiaries. Pension funds are also distributed outside the will. A will that truly works well will take all of these other assets into consideration.

4 It Fails to Fulfill Your Desires

Your will should accomplish exactly what you want. Do you want your children to receive their inheritance all at once, or at various intervals? Would you care to give Open Door Mission Foundation a percentage of your estate, or a set amount?

Perhaps you didn't know all the options when you signed your will. You may feel dissatisfied with your will. It may work as a legal document, but fail to work well as the expression of your true desires.

Is it time to redo your will? If so, we urge you to make an appointment with your attorney as soon as possible.

Our Estate Planning Advisors are available to talk with you about any of this. They can review bequest options with you and tell you about other giving possibilities.

Please complete the coupon below to let them know of your interest.

Please send me free literature about making a Will.

Please contact me (us) about a personal visit or other assistance. The best time to call me (us) is: _____

I (we) have already provided a bequest for Open Door Mission in my (our) Will.

Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss
Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

(_____) _____ @ _____
Phone _____ E-mail _____

Return this completed form to:
Ms. Becky Heath
Director of Development
Open Door Mission
P.O. Box 849
Houston, TX 77001-0849

If you would like to bequest a gift to Open Door Mission, please contact Becky Heath for more information at: 713-921-7520, ext. 218.

Please note: In order to responsibly steward funds, interviews for our newsletter stories are conducted long before the print date. The information herein is based on the interviewee's opinions and experience at the time of the interview.

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