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OPEN DOOR MISSION

Your Generosity At Work! N • E • W • S

WITH YOUR HELP

God took his life of broken promises...and gave him a promising life

On Sunday morning Jerome Hobbs can be found doing what he loves most—serving God as pastor of Little Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Mexia, Texas. But there was a time when he was **running** from God. Although he was raised in a churchgoing family, he says his childhood was dysfunctional. “For some reason, I always felt I was not good enough...,” he says.

A devastating blow

Then, at the age of 10, Jerome lost his mom. “I didn’t want to deal with her death,” he recalls. “I don’t know if that’s why I started to get into drug use, or maybe because it was around.” Perhaps both. Life got chaotic when Jerome’s dad remarried. As the family grew, it was easy to get lost in the crowd. But Jerome made it through high school, entered the Job Corps and learned to be a welder. He fell in love and got married, making the promises a young man makes—with the best of intentions. A son was born, and Jerome found plenty of work as a welder. “I started making good money,” he says. **“But with more money came more drugs.”**

“Back then...everybody around you smoked marijuana and drank,” he explains. “That was kind of acceptable...” Even when he began to use cocaine and crack, Jerome was in denial.

Then his marriage began to suffer. He and his wife separated several times. “She always loved me, she just couldn’t live with me,” he says.

“Save me!”

Finally, one night Jerome found himself alone in a drug house. “...I was going down a path that was going to lead me to death and destruction,” he says. That’s when Jerome got down on his knees and prayed: “If you are the God you say you are...**save me!**” The very next day his sister urged him to come to Open Door Mission.

Reluctantly he agreed, but all beds were taken and he had to sleep on the cafeteria floor. “The Lord just moved in

my heart on that night. I surrendered my life, right then and there!”

In our program, Jerome began to study the Bible. Day by day, God took care of every need. And when Jerome prayed for the healing of his marriage, within minutes he received a call from his wife. It took time, hard work and prayer to put Jerome’s marriage back together. “God told me, ‘...she’s tired of broken promises,’” he says. “Just put Me first, and I’ll take care of the rest.”

Jerome graduated from ODM nearly five years ago. Today, he and his wife are more in love than ever! Their son is in college. And through his ministry, God is using Pastor Hobbs to show others how putting Him first can turn a life of broken promises...into a promising life of hope.



Drugs nearly shattered Jerome’s marriage. But thanks to caring people like you, God’s love and a committed wife, it held together. Now they’re more in love than ever!

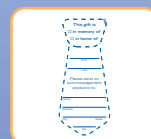
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MY VIEW
A Message
from Rick Hill

One of the things I enjoy about our ministry here at Open Door Mission is watching men who have lost their way reclaim and fulfill their God-given roles...as husbands, fathers, brothers, and friends. At intake, they're often devastated by hunger, hardship, addiction or alcoholism. They're barely surviving themselves, and can't focus on anyone or much of anything else but their pain.

As time passes and they give these issues over to God, healing begins to work a transformation in their hearts and lives. We have the privilege and pleasure of watching new life emerge like a butterfly from a cocoon. From a place of inner torment, the men are liberated and begin to look upward and outward. Husbands and fathers like Jerome Hobbs (on the front page) are restored to their wives and children. Fast friendships form among the men—or, as with Andy and Bill (on this page), between mentors and mentees that God brings together in His own unique way and time.

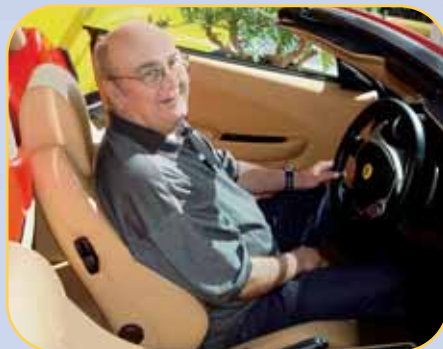
Drop by the Mission on any given day and you'll see plenty of examples of "brotherly love." This is one of the most enduring and valuable gifts you offer to homeless and hurting men through your support of Open Door Mission. They are blessed (so are we!), and you are a blessing. Thank you for making this possible.

Richard H. Hill Jr.

Richard H. Hill, Jr.
Executive Director

Bill & Andy: Mighty MENTors of God

Have you ever felt a call from God to do something special for Him? Andy Valadez has. And when he said "yes" to a church project called The Kingdom Assignment, it was the beginning of a rewarding ministry. As part of the assignment, God gave Andy the idea of organizing a "Night of Blessing" for 10 men at Open Door Mission. Imagine how excited they were about a night out that included a limousine ride, a steak dinner and a Houston Aeros game! Bill Adams was one of those men. At the game, he and Andy connected. Both are former Marines...both love the Lord. By the end of the evening, they already felt like brothers. Since then, they've become fast friends—or, as we call them, mighty MENTors of God!



Step Two

The next time Andy and Bill met was at Open Door Mission's Foot-Washing ceremony. "Bill washed my feet," recalls Andy. "It was just a really touching experience." From then on, Andy and Bill began to cultivate a mentoring relationship. A "mentor" is someone who serves as a counselor or guide to another person. Andy has his own marketing firm, Marketing Dynamics, and was eager to use his professional and personal skills to help Bill in any way he could. As a mentor, Andy counsels and guides Bill in all kinds of areas—from setting short- and long-term goals, to praying about those goals and actually

taking action. "Bill has grown spiritually over the year, and his confidence amazes me," says Andy. "I once employed him temporarily to telemarket for me. He was calling on Presidents and CEOs of some of Houston's top businesses. The guy has guts!"

Bill, who now works in Food Services at Open Door Mission, really values Andy's friendship. "We constantly stay in touch with each other," he says. This could mean a phone call on a busy day, meeting somewhere for lunch...or something more creative. At the beginning of the year, they had a meeting to help Bill make a list of goals that include a home, family, car, and an ongoing ministry. "I started writing down goals," recalls Bill. "The next day, I'm calling Andy saying, 'Hey man! We've got to rock and roll.'" So, guess what? Andy and Bill went looking at Ferraris!

Challenging each other up the hill

As these two men commit to investing time together in prayer, fellowship and making things happen, their roles as "mentor and mentee" are blending. "We say that I've been mentoring Bill, but Bill's actually mentoring me," explains Andy. "We're just challenging each other up the hill, so to speak." As for Bill, he's deeply grateful that Andy entered his life at a time when he needed that uphill urging. "I never used to have someone in my life who took an interest in me," he says. "Whenever I had dreams, someone shot them

down...but when I got with Andy, I started realizing...if you never get up and move, how's God going to bless you?"

Having dreams. Challenging each other up the hill. Being blessed, and being a blessing. All apt descriptions of Andy and Bill. That's why we call them mighty MENTors of God!

Together Bill (second from the left) and Andy (second from the right) are learning that, with God, life is full of exciting possibilities!



Is God calling you to a special assignment? Open Door Mission would love to connect you with someone like Bill who needs a mentor. To learn more, call Curtis Lovett, at (713) 921-7520 ext. 235.

Two more lives changed... THANK YOU!

Two more men have reached a milestone here at Open Door Mission. Ronald and Bryant, our most recent graduates, are ready to move on, and they'd like to thank you for your support. Your ongoing prayers as they enter this new chapter of their lives would be deeply appreciated!



RONALD

When his relationship with his girlfriend crumbled, Ronald was suddenly homeless. But better days are ahead! Ronald is now working on his GED, and plans to eventually attend college and become a technician. "The Mission has given me a lot of incentive, as far as my goals and my future," he says. Ronald is especially grateful for the educational opportunities he's had and the daily access to Chapel and prayer.



BRYANT

Yearning to belong, Bryant joined a gang. If it weren't for Open Door Mission, he says, "I'd probably still be in my mess." But now Bryant belongs to Jesus...and that has changed everything! At Houston Community College, he's working towards a nursing degree and seeking employment through their work-study program. To all of you who support the Mission, Bryant says, "Thank you for this opportunity!"

"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love."

—Romans 12:10

on the move

