

Hi, my name is Toby Haywood Saunders. I am a locally raised 'Wancheser' from Roanoke Island here on the Outer Banks of NC. I gave my life to Jesus when I was 13 while attending Wanchese Christian Academy. I grew in love with God and enjoyed being part of the church. My granddad was a preacher and I had always been raised in the Truth. I could remember the peace, the amazing feeling that comes from the greatness of God. Unfortunately, I was curious and started flirting with the world around the age of 15. I became overwhelmed with the desires and temptations that this world offers. I took my eyes off of Jesus and began smoking pot and drinking. I quit school and started the path onto harder drugs. I thought all I needed to do was make money and I would have all the friends and girls I needed. My life slowly went out of control. Money had become my god and pills and cocaine were all I sought after. In 2007, I went to get help at Greensboro Teen Challenge but left after only 3 months thinking I was good and had it all together and didn't need any more help. Again, it was not long before I took my eyes off of Jesus and fell flat. It felt like I was just digging and digging a deeper hole for myself. And I am telling you, that muck and mire was deep. The years between age 15 and 32 felt like a blink of the eye, wrecked relationships, wrecked vehicles, burnt down home, overdoses, lies, stealing from my own family. Through all that I remembered the name of Jesus and I cried out, "Help me, save me from this thing I have become." And that scripture comes to mind, "I will never leave you or forsake you". Praise God! I am a child of God and we ARE more than conquerors through Jesus Christ. Romans 5:8 tells us that "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us".

I was arrested in September 2010 and that is when God really began to speak to me. I continued to cry out for help and I believe God said, "Alright now, you know I made you, created you and that I have great plans for you and a purpose for your life. Seek me and you shall find me when you search with all your heart". That was it. I realized I was sick and tired of my life and told God, "Here I am". On October 15, 2010, Director Daniels helped me get back into Teen Challenge and I graduated the program in January of 2012. After graduating I went straight to becoming an intern, starting first at South Carolina Teen Challenge and then here at Dare Challenge. God is so good and faithful. I can honestly say I feel that amazing feeling again like I did when I first gave my life to Christ at age 13. I thank God for the Dare Challenge/Teen Challenge ministries, without them, I would have never been able to grow and become the man I am today. I'm praying for God's direction in my life and am heading to Bridges Bible College in Winston Salem to begin that journey.

Please continue to pray for me as I leave for school. I'm going on faith believing God is going to provide all my needs and for a job to provide for finances. Would like to thank my amazing Grandparents; what a blessing they have been in my life for their love, support, and help. Also Manteo First Assembly for helping me get started on first payment of tuition for the semester. Can't wait and see what God is going to do in the days to come hopefully a wonderful Christian wife and a family will come in His plans for my life. Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

I love you all and thank you for allowing me to share a fraction of what God is doing in my life. Brethren, I count not myself to have appended: but this thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.