

JOSEPH'S CLIENT TESTIMONY

DIRECTOR'S NOTE
MICHEAL WOODS

MONTHLY MIRACLE
PARTNERS

JOSEPH'S STORY OF CHANGE

In 1988, life seemed picture-perfect for me—I was married and had a great job, a house, and a car. My reputation in the community, with family, and at work was impeccable. Little did I know, one particular day that year would become a turning point, altering the course of my life forever.

On that day, my wife and I were invited to a friend's house where we encountered cocaine. Despite being almost thirty and having never been around cocaine before, we decided to try it. While my wife seemed unaffected, it hit me differently, triggering a physical, mental, and spiritual war that would persist for years.

Initially, I didn't yield to consistent drug use, but over time, it became an off-and-on struggle. Despite having a great job as a printing press operator and being well-respected, my focus shifted entirely to cocaine, leading me to quit my job and almost lose everything. Continued inside...



MORE THAN \$95,000 WAS RAISED TO SUPPORT OUR ABBA'S HOUSE PROGRAM.

We're so thankful for all our sponsors & everyone who supported this special night.

Curbside Mgmt, Inc.
Kimmel & Associates
AMCHC
Redefine Facility Cleaning
Asheville Elevator
Owle Construction
HomeTrust Bank
Kimmel Benefits
MB Haynes

Cornerstone Physical Therapy
Tennoca Construction
FitFund Raising
BlueDawg
AeroFlow
Blue Mountain Pizza
iHeartMedia Asheville
Star104.3



Continued from Cover... Recognizing the severity of my situation, my wife gave me an ultimatum—choose her or the drugs. Thankfully, I chose her, achieving sobriety for almost a decade. Around forty, I encountered a new form of cocaine in crack, and it took hold of me like nothing had before. That began a twenty-year struggle.

Crack introduced a new level of emotional turmoil fueled by doubt, fear, and confusion. I was unable to concentrate on any one thought, feeling completely distracted and alone, contemplating suicide during my lowest moments.

Understanding the toll my addiction was taking, my wife reached her breaking point, ending our marriage. Despite this loss, she continued to care about me and pray for my health. My entire family situation crumbled and I lost my relationship with my children too.

Many years passed without direction or purpose until I hit rock bottom, realizing the severity of my situation. Alone in my room, I faced the bleak prospect of dying unnoticed. In a desperate search for help, I searched for a treatment center that was centered around God and found Western Carolina Rescue Ministries.

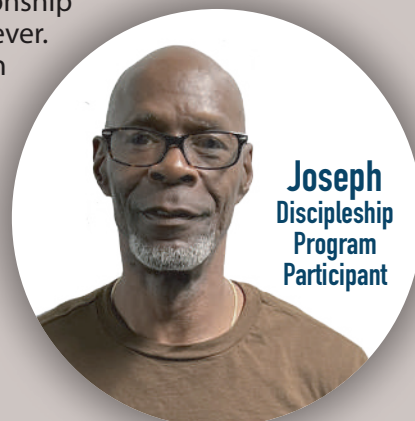
Upon entering the Discipleship and Recovery Program, I was still unfocused but determined to work on myself. Despite discarding drugs, some of my old thought patterns lingered. The ministry displayed patience, even

in the face of my pride and anger. Helping me move past my pride and condescending attitude towards others, the ministry saw something salvageable in me.

Though I didn't notice it at first, people around me saw slight transformations in my interactions and attitudes. Over time, my heart has softened, allowing me to be patient with myself and others. I've accepted two key truths: Everyone comes to the ministry broken, and even God's children have problems.

God is transforming my heart of stone into one of flesh. I no longer want to be mean or condescending; instead, I desire kindness and the opportunity to help without receiving anything in return. Self-sufficiency – a key part of my prior life – is a lie. I'm learning more and more to depend on God.

Now, I have a real relationship with God, stronger than ever. An intimate friendship with God has grown, one where I am aware He knows and understands me. I still have a ways to go, and I know it won't always be easy. But this is sure: I'll never be the same again, and it's all because of Him.



Joseph
Discipleship
Program
Participant

FOLLOWING JESUS WITH “INTENTIONAL LOVE”

I recently witnessed an extraordinary moment between my son and grandson. As we worked in the yard, a remarkable resemblance between them struck me for the first time. Despite coaching my sons in basketball for years and being intimately familiar with their mannerisms, I had overlooked my first son's distinctly unique way of walking.

During our hard work spreading mulch, my grandson – a mere 3 years old – committed to being his dad's right-hand man. Where one ventured, the other faithfully followed. That's when it happened. My grandson flawlessly mirrored every move my son made, and as they walked, step by similar step, a heartwarming smile spread across my face. They moved in unison, big and little versions of each other.

This touching moment brought to mind the event in the first chapter of John's gospel when Jesus called the first disciples. Andrew, Peter's brother, shadowed Jesus so closely that His attention was irresistibly drawn to Andrew. Then, in the final verses of the same chapter, Jesus directed his attention to Phillip and uttered the transformative words, “Follow me.”

When Jesus called Phillip to follow, He foresaw that intentional obedience would allow Phillip to see the unseen, go to unknown places, and receive blessings he never imagined. Jesus is calling us to no less than that today! And like Phillip, we must follow. We too should follow Jesus so passionately that our pursuit is unmistakable. But, it is sad how often our Christian lives become nonchalant. We might nod in casual agreement with His word or spend a bit of time in prayer. But I wonder how often we fail to truly engage in our daily walk with Jesus. We have this powerful opportunity to immerse ourselves in His presence, yet we often treat this privilege casually, merely inviting Him along on our journey instead of deliberately ordering our steps with His.

So, how can we engage with Jesus in a manner that is truly transformational? Examining the gospels, I see three transformative practices. First, we must be intentional – staying close to Him and purposefully walking in step with Him, moment by moment. Intentionality is the first secret to following Jesus. In John 15, Jesus reinforces this truth by likening His relationship with us to the bond between a vine and its branches. He urges us to “Abide in me,” promising that this deep, intentional connection will yield fruit and abundant provision. Friend, whatever you desire and ask, it shall be done. However, let's be clear – our desires can only find fulfillment as we abide in Him. This is the divine formula; to obtain what God has destined for you, you must intentionally position yourself in a posture of deep abiding. And, let me assure you, this moment-by-moment lifestyle of following God in total dependence is no burdensome task. Quite the opposite – walking with Him lightens our burdens. He called out to those heavily laden (burdened), inviting them to come to Him and find rest (Matthew 11:30).

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul echoes Jesus, urging us in chapter four, verse one, to, “Walk worthy of our calling (to follow Jesus).” Then, in the first verse of Ephesians 5, he instructs us to “be imitators of God as dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us.” Paul's words point toward the other two secrets to following Jesus. Secondly, following Jesus requires that we, “Love Him.” And thirdly: “Love people.” Friend, let's not be mistaken – love, even for God, isn't automatic. If it were, Jesus wouldn't have instructed us to love Him. In today's world, challenges abound, and our commitment to following God can grow stale, relegating love to an afterthought. Anyone who has walked with Jesus for a significant amount of time will attest that difficult times require pressing into a more intimate place in love.

How do we practice intimate love? We must cultivate our relationship with Him. Difficulties and hard situations should not cause us to doubt God's love; rather, it is the distance we place between ourselves and Him that poses a threat. We must actively and intentionally love and close the gap that can naturally develop between us and Him. When we walk with Him in love, tragedy cannot control us, anxieties cannot overwhelm us, and successes cannot divert us. By viewing God as the lord of all, rather than some substitute Santa Claus, we gain clarity to discern the bad and the good in life. We measure ourselves against His character, not the circumstances of seemingly more successful individuals.

I prefer to walk closely with Him in love, especially in challenging times, because His intentions for me are never unfair. He possesses the wisdom to comprehend my struggles and the compassion to guide me through any storm. But let us not be casual; we must follow and love Him intentionally. Furthermore, we cannot fully love God without embracing love for others – this is the third secret of following Jesus. In Mark 12:30-31, Jesus instructs us to love our neighbors as ourselves. Countless individuals cross our paths – some dear friends, others casual acquaintances. While we do not control who enters our lives, we can choose in advance to love them. We can, and we must.

Despite potential mishandling, disrespect, or disregard from others, we can still love. This unique love demands intentionality; everyone deserves to experience God's love, and we may be the conduits God has designated to show them His love. So, the secret to following Jesus lies in being intentional, loving Him, and loving others. It's not an easy journey, not by any means, but it is refreshingly simple.

Imagine the impact if we were to follow Him in this way. Just as I witnessed my grandson following my son, the onlooking world would be captivated as we walked with our Heavenly Father. Oh, that we would become so adept at walking with Him in this manner! It is not just a possibility; it is my fervent prayer for us this year – that we would follow Jesus closely, passionately loving God, and genuinely loving each other.

**Michael
Woods**
Executive
Director



Winter Weather

IN-KIND DONATIONS

- Thermal Shirts & Pants
- Hats
- Gloves
- Scarves
- Winter Boots
- Heavy Coats
- Jeans - Men's & Women's
- Brand New Underwear

BRING YOUR DONATIONS TO:

225 Patton Avenue
Asheville, NC

DROP-OFF HOURS:

Monday: 1-3PM
Wednesday: 8-10AM • 1-3PM
Thursday: 8-10AM • 1-3PM
Friday: 8-10AM • 1-3PM
Saturday: 8-10AM



225 Patton Avenue
PO Box 909
Asheville, NC 28802
828-254-1529

Our Board of Directors

Kevin Mathis, Chairman
Barry Lawson, Vice Chairman
Brian Gompers, Treasurer
George Gabler, Secretary
Brad Galbraith
Charlie Kimmel
EJ Mathis, Ex-Officio
William Wilcox, Ex-Officio
Micheal Woods, Executive Director

Ways to Give:



PHONE

Call (828) 254-1529 and we can help you set up a regular monthly contribution schedule.



ONLINE

www.WesternCarolinaRescue.org
Click Donate Now.
Recurring gift options follow.



DRAFT

Mail a voided check and let us know how much you would like to give. We'll help you set it up.



What is a Monthly Miracle Partner?

Someone who gives each month, because they want to be a part of life change.

Want to become a Monthly Miracle Partner?
Call us today! 828-254-1529 & ask for Rusty.

