

PGMNews

OCTOBER 2017

ARTICLE BY DANIEL WOOLMAN

From violent gang member to vibrant follower of Christ, David's conversion story once again highlights the amazing work of transformation God is powerfully performing at Pacific Garden Mission.

In the Gospel of Luke 15:7, our Lord Jesus proclaims: "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." He knew that many who would hear the Gospel would not open their hearts to it but for the few that did it would be eternally worthwhile. Seeing one lost sinner accept Christ into their hearts is one of the most rewarding parts of working at Pacific Garden Mission.

Often, it has been said we are a front-line ministry because we are often the last chance for someone to receive the Gospel

Message. Jesus would reach out to the sick, the hopeless, the destitute, and quite frankly, the outcasts that society had given up on. Many people who find the mission are under the assumption that society has given up on them; frequently, these people then give up on themselves. Fortunately, when these individuals come to this broken and humbled state, it provides some of the most fertile soil for the Word of God to take root in their hearts.

Joy is found when we see someone completely lost find faith in Jesus Christ, turning their life completely around. This transformation is an encouraging and powerful

reminder of God's true power. In this month's newsletter, we decided to share the testimonies of two people to whom, in the world's perspective, seemed completely lost and hopeless. In the eyes of God, however, they were just lost sheep in need of a Shephard.

David's powerful, heartfelt conversion testimony inspired his audience. See PGM's YouTube channel, Episode 126



My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: —JOHN 10:27 KJV

As a young boy, David's father was locked up for murder, leaving his mom to raise him and his siblings. Unable to cope, his mother became addicted to drugs and began participating in prostitution. The Department of Family and Child Services, after noticing bruises and ripped clothing, eventually took custody of the children, splitting up his family. This is David's testimony:

DAVID

David hears the Gospel preached at PGM



“We went to school one day and a social worker told us; we can't have you with torn clothes, scars on your head, and all beat up the way you kids are, so she contacted Child Protective Services. That is when we got separated. I first went to a shelter at the age of six, where I was abused by one of the workers there. Even though I never told anyone, the place was eventually shut down because others came forward about the abuse. From there I was sent to a group home, and having so much anger built up inside of me, I would just keep to myself, but also started becoming violent.

When I used to go out I saw the gang

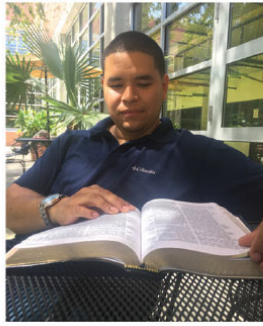
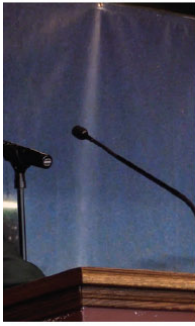
bangers on the corners; I decided to be like them. I saw that they had money and fellowship, and I wanted that too. So, I gang banged for the next six years of my life until I got shot during a drug deal gone bad and my friend got killed. I ended up going to prison six months after that for a home invasion, and did three and a half years in a super max prison because of my aggression.

I wanted the good life back then, and without God in my life I chose the wrong ways to go about doing it. When I got out of prison I started doing the same bad things that I did before. My parole officer was going to lock me up again and I knew I needed a change in my life. I looked up Pacific Garden Mission and was planning to come here after I got out of prison. I told my parole officer my testimony and that I wanted to get help at Pacific Garden Mission, and gave me an ultimatum.

He said he would remove my warrant and not make me go back to prison if I went to PGM and joined the Men's Bible Program. He brought me to the side of the building in hand cuffs and said; “Either you go in there and get your life straight, or I am taking you back to prison.” So that is what I did, I decided to get my life straight.

At that time, I didn't know too much about God. After about three months of being here I heard a sermon from Pastor Phil during Saturday night Praise and Testimony and I gave my life to Christ. After that things started to change in me. I started to talk differently and think differently. Even though I still struggled and everything wasn't perfect, I saw myself slowly maturing and growing. I realized I needed to have a relationship with Him to be successful.

Being in the New Life Program has taught me different perspectives about living in the flesh and living in the Spirit. It renews your



Middle photo: David spends quiet time studying Scripture in the courtyard.

Photo right: David enjoys Christian fellowship in the cafe with other Bible believing friends.

mind because you find out you are not by yourself. You have people with you who may be struggling with different things, but that are still seeking to grow spiritually, and it helps to be able to do that together with others. My whole life I have wanted an escape from the bondages of pure evil of the drug addictions my parents faced and the abuse I went through growing up. Everyone's dream in the neighborhood is to sell drugs and get rich and leave the neighborhood, but what they don't realize is that they are ruining other people's lives as they try to escape that way of life. I see now how I have ruined others' lives and I want to help change that. I want to

work and minister to our youth and help them escape that lifestyle before they get too old. I want to give back to the community to help change people like me. I want to impact people's lives with the Word of God because there is no program or youth center that can change someone like God."

David is one of many young men that find their way here each year seeking help. For many, PGM is one of the last chances they have to turn their lives around. It's amazing to think there have been thousands of people over the years who've not only turn their lives over to Christ, but also built a new life on a solid foundation.

Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. —JONAH 2:1-3 KJV

For over thirty years Rose was addicted to crack cocaine. Finding herself completely hopeless, she cried out to God for help and was led to Pacific Garden Mission. Here is her testimony:

ROSE

"For over thirty years of my life I was involved in smoking crack. I finally reached a point where I wanted to just end it all. I felt that my family, world, and even God would be better off without me! I was going to com-



ROSE: BEFORE AND AFTER HER LIFE WAS TRANSFORMED

mit suicide. I was going to cut my wrists. I was laying flat on my back in my bed and I just looked up to the ceiling and I told the Lord, I said 'Lord, I don't want to die like this' I started to cry out to the Lord and asked him 'Can You save me just one more time?' So, next thing I know Pacific Garden Mission came to my mind and I know it wasn't nobody but God because I was all alone. I was like why do I have to go there? I can stay here. Can't you work a miracle here? But He told me to go and I said 'Okay God, I am going to step out on faith and I am going to trust You and I am going to go to that place.'

I came with a willing spirit and a determined spirit. I told the Lord 'I am going to do this for You because You asked me to come here.' I used to do it for my family, for my church family, and for my children, but this time I did it for God and I told Him I am going to see what You do with me! I know what I needed because He had delivered me and set me free before. I knew I needed Jesus and I knew He would do it for me again.

I really enjoyed the Women's Bible

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Program and I recommend it to anyone. I got to read my Bible and get closer to God going to classes, going to counseling and I really got close to God and so I became a new creature.

2 Corinthians 5:17 *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

God has made all things new for me today. He has really changed my life, this place, Pacific Garden Mission has really changed my life."

The before and after images of Rose and David are powerful visual statements of the power of God. God uses Pacific Garden Mission as an instrument to reach the lost with the Gospel Message of Jesus Christ and although many have closed their hearts to the truth, I have come to find that it is never too late for someone to change. What happened with David and Rose happens every day here and it is only

YouTube



Rose gleams with enthusiasm as she shares her testimony on PGM's YouTube channel, Episode 127.

Finding time from her work at PGM, Rose looks forward to soul-filling Bible reading.

because of the faithful donors that help us. We thank you for your persistent and heavenly sighted giving. We are fighting a spiritual battle but our God is able.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—1 John 1:9

Rose proudly displays her Diploma of Bible Studies which she received earlier this year.





A Word from Philip Kwiatkowski

President, Pacific Garden Mission

Why We Serve

When Jesus went back to His hometown He read from the book of Isaiah and in so reading He declared His message, Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he

hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised."

Jesus encountered varying degrees of human misery, the hungry, the poor, the sick, even those that society had rejected. In the midst of suffering, Jesus declares that He came to preach the Gospel first and foremost.

At Pacific Garden Mission we are inundated with human suffering, we minister to the addicted, the poor, the homeless, women and children with no place to go. We have programs, we feed the poor, clothe the needy but the heart of what we do is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I have heard from so many people that have tried multiple rehabs, recovery programs and everything that the world offers in order to ease the pain, but to no avail. They have stated that only when they heard the life changing message of Jesus Christ their life was changed. Romans 1:16

reads, "For I am not ashamed

of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

I just spoke to a lady that stated before coming to PGM she was a hopeless addict, she tried to cut her wrists, her own children did not want to see her, she thought that her life was over. She came here and gave her life to Jesus and He took the addiction away, reconciled her to her family and as she was moving out to her own place after graduation was crying and thanking the Lord for what He had done in her life.

He came to heal the broken hearted, set the captives free, give sight to the blind and set at Liberty those that are bruised. The world can offer temporary relief but Jesus Christ can change forever.

PACIFIC GARDEN MISSION Transforming lives since 1877

PURPOSE

To reach the lost with the Gospel of Christ.

MISSION STATEMENT

We serve with the compassion of Christ and minister with the transforming message of the Gospel.

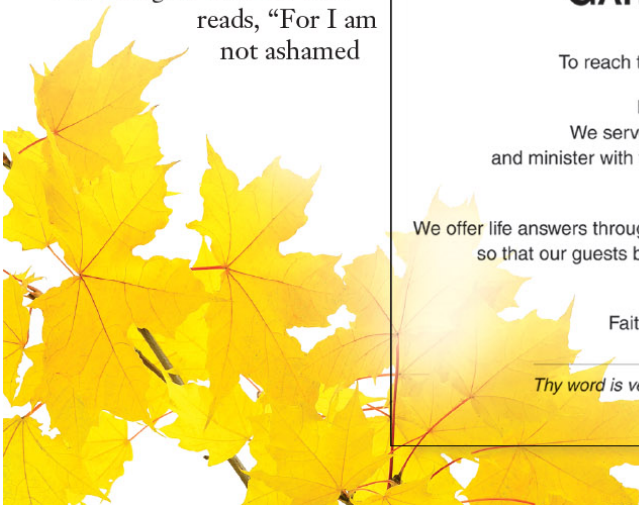
VISION

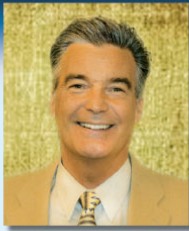
We offer life answers through faith in Jesus Christ, through any season of life, so that our guests become fully functioning followers of Christ.

CORE VALUES

Faith • The Word • Truth • Love

*Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.
— Psalm 119:140*





FINANCIAL UPDATE Stephen Welch, Director of Development

“And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.” —1 Chronicles 4:10

God is faithful. We have been praying for increase in a number of areas in this ministry and we have seen God answer our prayers in several ways.

Typically August is our slowest month for donations. There are many months where our spending exceeds our donations. This August was an enthusiastic month for donations and 25% higher than the year prior. We thank God and our partners who support this amazing ministry where Jesus Saves. Many have increased their giving and we have also seen the number of donors has increased.

Our greatest desire is to see more men and women born again and seek discipleship through our resident programs. Each month the stories of lives transformed testify to the power of the Gospel. The harvest is great and the laborers are few and we pray for more of our guests to be reached and disciple one on one. Unfortunately, our staff is spread thin and we pray that God will provide the funds to increase the number of staff members to accommodate the growing numbers of people who walk through our doors. Please pray for us to reach the lost with the Gospel of Christ by increasing the number of qualified staff members.

Thank you for your faithful support allowing us to serve with the compassion of Christ and minister with the transforming message of the Gospel. God is moving and you are partnering with God to help PGM reach its fullest potential.

WHAT YOUR MONEY SUPPORTS AND PROVIDES

Pacific Garden Mission's budget is completely donor funded. We receive no government funding. We are eternally grateful for the individuals, businesses, churches and foundations that make it possible for PGM to serve thousands of homeless men, women and children each year.

When you come along side of us financially you're not giving to the mission, but through the mission to the people that need your help the most. We are serious about demonstrating our stewardship, and we invite you to learn more by visiting Pacific Garden Mission, where lives have been transformed since 1877.

Here are just some of the ways your giving is measured (AUGUST)

Daily average of homeless receiving aid and attending Gospel services....**538**

Number of men and women enrolled in Bible study programs and provided room and board....**89**

Approximate number of plates of food served....**25,806**

Estimated number of items of clothing distributed or given to other missions....**38,457**

Number of patients treated in our free medical/dental clinic....**154**

Number of persons who professed faith in Christ....**276**

Stations and outlets in the U.S. and around the world broadcasting "Unshackled!"....**3,070**

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