



Chris walked away from wretched homelessness to a redeemed life.

“I SEE THE HAND OF GOD EVERY DAY AT PGM.”

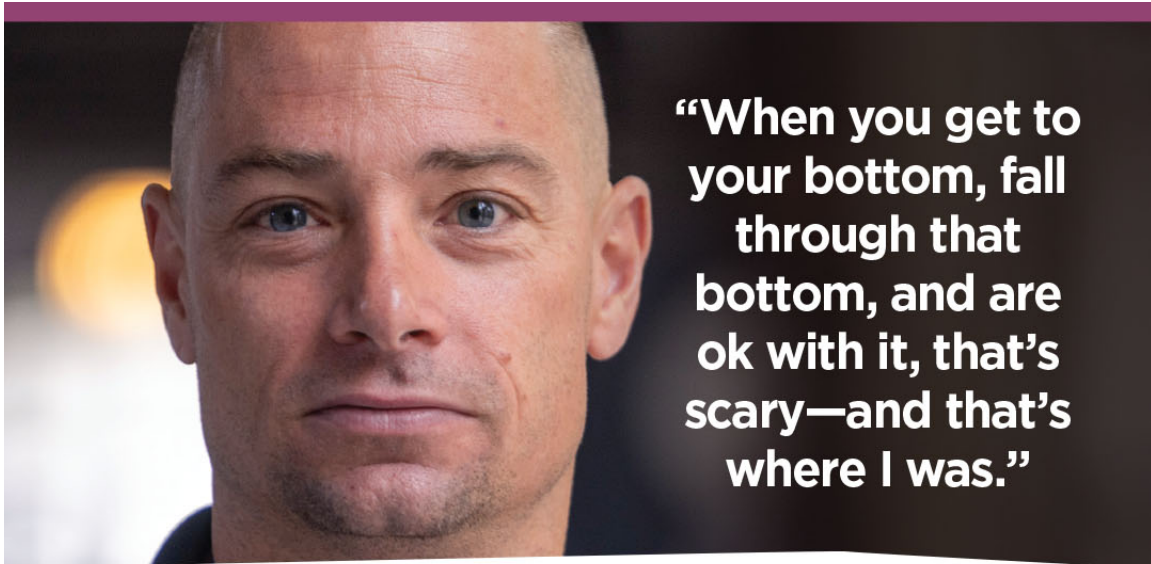
In 2019, we shared a story of Chris Ridgeway, who was in the Bible program. In this month's issue, we want to update you on Chris's story to show how God is working in his life and continually using him to help others here at PGM. Recently, Chris was promoted to manager of the Men's Guest Services Department, where he's sharing the love and Gospel of Jesus Christ daily. It is only with your support that Chris's story is possible. Thank you.

CHRIS RIDGEWAY

“My name is Chris Ridgeway, and I am currently the Men's Guest Services

Department Manager at Pacific Garden Mission. As a child, I moved around a lot. We would spend three or four years in a location before getting uprooted, not just to another city but often to another state. That happened several times growing up. My father always assumed that if we had everything we needed, he was expressing love. I felt loved by my parents, but it just wasn't expressed much.

“As I got older, I ventured out, trying to find what I may have been missing at home; I am not entirely sure. At a young age, I was in trouble a lot. My identity was in the drugs, illegal activities, women, and everything but Christ. From 2008 until 2020, I was



homeless, and I don’t just mean homeless, as in sleeping on mom and dad’s couch, but I was literally sleeping outside. I would go weeks without a shower. I would step into bathrooms at McDonald’s to brush my teeth. I was in and out of prison several times, and that was the point I was at right before I came here to Pacific Garden Mission.

“In the end, I had just lost all hope and didn’t care anymore, and I think that is the scariest place a person can be because then, there is no reason to change. I’d hit a point before I came

here where I felt completely comfortable sleeping outside. I got to a point of being completely comfortable with not knowing where I was going to eat or shower again. I found comfort in people you probably shouldn’t be hanging out with. When you get to your bottom, fall through that bottom, and are ok with it, that’s scary—and that’s where I was.

“I came here searching for something, but I wasn’t coming here searching for God, Jesus Christ, or salvation. I knew that if I didn’t straighten myself out and have some sort of



The study of Scripture is critical at PGM. Chris is shown here in a staff Bible study.

documentation changing my life, I would be heading back to prison. So I came to PGM looking for a quick fix—a get-out-of-jail-free card. But God did the unexpected with me, something I didn't think I needed or wanted.

“Here at PGM, I was able to slow down and realize what I was missing in my life, and it began to open my eyes as to what it means to be a genuine disciple of Jesus Christ. I realized it had nothing to do with me and what I could or couldn't do. I did the substance abuse program initially, and then I enrolled in the discipleship program. While in the discipleship program, I was given the opportunity to work in the dayroom as a ministry assignment through the Bible program, and in there, I came alive.

“Working in the dayroom can be challenging. The most difficult thing is witnessing the loss of hope in men like me because I know there is hope. But, the best part of working in the dayroom is seeing the amazing transformations. It doesn't have so much to do with employment or housing but the transformation Christ makes on an individual. That is a

**“We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.”
—2 Corinthians 4:8-9 KJV**



Chris is now married to his wife Cati whom he met while they both served at PGM.

permanent transformation. That is eternal. I've been at the Mission now for almost five years and serving our male guests in the dayroom for four years. I didn't come to the Mission to work; I came broken like many men who come to PGM looking for help. I joined the New Day program on April 2nd, 2019. I had no idea how the Lord would use me.

“Today, I am married, have my family back, and the wonderful opportunity to manage the Men's Guest Services Department. I now get to share how the Gospel has changed my life with men in those same chairs I once sat in, broken and lost. My life had a 'but God' moment. Many times in the Bible, when it seemed to be hopeless, God made a way. I was hopeless, but God has now brought me to a place of complete transformation. He has replaced my heart of stone with one of love for his people. I am amazed today to see God not only working in my life but the employees that work under me, the men we serve, and the disciples in the Bible Ministry.”

As Chris continues to let God work in his life and allows the Word of God to guide his steps, we can see what it means to have a new life in Christ. At PGM, we have seen God's Word mold lives so that people become

fully functioning followers of Christ. Chris' new life in Christ would not have been possible without you. Thank you for supporting our ministry and the lives healed through God's power and His people's faith.

The Bible: The Foundation of What We Do

One of the most common sights you will see if you walk through Pacific Garden Mission is people studying the Bible. Whether individually or in groups, the importance of reading and understanding God's Word is central to what we teach and do. Our New Life and New Day programs utilize the Bible as our main textbook. It is also common to see our staff taking part in group Bible

studies throughout the week. Environments like this are not common and serve as an important reminder that there is always room for the Word of God in our daily lives. It nurtures, encourages, and teaches us.

Thank you for supporting this ministry and ensuring this way of life, centered around God's Word, is introduced and implemented daily.



GIVE NOW pgm.org/donate

Visit our website at pgm.org to learn more about PGM's multiple ministries to the needy.



A Word from Philip Kwiatkowski
President, Pacific Garden Mission

THE MESS IS ALWAYS WORTH IT!

“Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox.” —Proverbs 14:4 KJV

I love this verse, for it tells the reality of ministry. Ministry and life at the Mission can be messy. The stories you hear, the pain you see, and, at times, you must deal with unruly and difficult people. I am reminded of a story told by Mission founder Mrs. Clarke:

“One night, when the Clarkes took the midnight train as usual after a strenuous day, they were obligated to make the two-mile walk from the station to their residence through a terrific storm, facing heavy rain and sleet all the way. When entering the house, Mrs. Clarke later related, she found his satanic majesty on hand, and with a modest voice, he inquired, ‘Does it pay?’ I emphatically replied, ‘Yes. I’d walk ten miles or all night if I could be the means of winning a soul.’”

Life on the front lines can be challenging, but when you see what God has done in the lives of so many individuals, it is worth it. I just got off the

phone with a couple who came here in 2009 with a drug addiction and is now happily serving the Lord. The husband, Bennie, just interviewed for a job at a rescue mission in Pennsylvania. *This makes it worth it.*

Ron, who came here with a drug problem, found Christ, just graduated from Moody, and is now pastoring a church. *This makes it worth it.*

Yesterday, I saw a man named Chris who came here with a drug problem a few years ago. He is now serving the Lord as a truck driver. *This makes it worth it.*

I want to thank the Lord and our supporters for making it possible for the Mission to exist and continue to serve as a light to those in darkness.



Brothers in Christ—Pastor Phil and Pastor Ron Childers mentioned in this article.

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GODLY STEWARDSHIP

Impacting Others for the Good

Osman Webb,
Vice-President of Administration
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“Now he that plants and he that waters are one . . . for we are laborers together with God” — I Corinthians 3:8-9 KJV

It cannot be emphasized enough how much your generous support means at Pacific Garden Mission for the work being done. As a result of your generosity, we are able to receive and minister to multiple single mothers and their children who enter our doors. Men and women who are enslaved to various addictions are gradually able to experience sobriety, relief, and a genuine sense of hope. So many of our residents hail from a traumatic background of horrid abuse and rejection, but they are now on the receiving end of compassionate care so true healing may take place.

In this issue, you'll read the story

of Mr. Christopher Ridgeway, a man who has been transformed by the power of the Gospel and is now one of our managers in the overnight guest's dayroom. I wish you could see Mr. Ridgeway in action here; it would certainly bless you. He has such a compassionate heart for people and deals with them in such a gentle and dignified way. I want to underscore that it's not just several of our residents who are impacted by Chris' story and service; I, too, am moved by what God has done in this young man's life to touch others.

God is using you in an extraordinary way to change lives at this Mission. From my heart to yours, I want to earnestly thank you for your prayers, financial support, and expressions of involvement. You are making an eternal impact in many lives!

Praise God for graciously permitting us to be laborers with Him in the good He is accomplishing at Pacific Garden Mission.

THE IMPACT WE MAKE TOGETHER

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 support us financially, you're not only giving *to* the Mission, but *through* the Mission to people who need your help the most. In August your support made a true difference:

On average, **521** homeless people received aid and Gospel services each day

About **25,483** plates of food were served

29,000 items of clothing were distributed

3,154 media outlets around the world broadcasted *Unshackled!*

34 men and women were enrolled in Bible study programs and provided room and board

17 mothers with their children who were sheltered at PGM

106 people professed faith in Christ and became new believers

With your encouragement and support, we minister hope to the homeless, addicted, and brokenhearted.