



community success initiative

HELPING INDIVIDUALS & COMMUNITIES MOVE FROM WHERE THEY ARE TO WHERE THEY WANT TO BE

Kurtis Taylor's Testimony

As a child growing up, low self-esteem propelled me to try to fit-in with other kids by any means necessary. My first drug was alcohol and it took away all of my feelings of inadequacy. In those early days, alcohol put an 'S' on my chest and I was addicted right from the start. Alcoholism led to an abuse of Marijuana and by the age of 16 I was addicted to crack-cocaine. I spent 10 long hard years in the streets – homeless for the most part,

unemployable, and completely hopeless. I sold counterfeit drugs as a profession and shoplifting was a way of life for me. I was in and out of jail for years and arrested more times than I can count. In 1996, I went through a treatment center and moved into an Oxford House. I fell in love with the Oxford House concept and I became involved. I helped to open more Oxford Houses and did service work whenever I could. I married my beautiful wife in 1999 and I moved out of Oxford House. 9 months later I suffered a terrible 21-day relapse. I managed to stay clean for another 9 months and relapsed again, for 30 days this time. I just couldn't get back into the swing of recovery. The shame and the guilt were killing me. I managed to stay clean for 18 months, and then I relapsed again on 6/1/02. This was the mother of all relapses. I lost my wife, my home, my car, my mind – everything. The streets gave me a beating that I will never forget. Two days before Christmas in 2002, I was either going to kill myself or surrender to God's will. By God's grace, I surrendered myself completely to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I turned myself in to the authorities for some crimes I had committed and served 17 months in the NC Department of Corrections. Upon release, I thought I was going to a homeless shelter and I was going thanking God for a shelter to go to.



However, my good friends Keith and Kathleen Gibson (Chief Operating Officer of Oxford House Inc.) decided to take me into their home for a few days. They set up an interview at an Oxford House for me, gave me clothes to wear, food to eat, and plenty of Love. I didn't even get a chance to fill out a job application before I was blessed with a full-time job. Jesus put my marriage back together 3 months after my release from prison. Since then, He has blessed me to be the husband that my wife deserves and a good father to my wonderful children. He has also blessed me to own my own business and I am an Outreach Worker for Oxford Houses of NC. At my Church, I am a co-teacher for the 15 to 17 year old Sunday School Class, I serve on the Usher Board, I am the Assistant Director of the Baptist Training Union as well as a trainer for the Evangelism Committee. I volunteer at Wake Correctional on Monday nights for the Yokefellow Ministry and I also sponsor inmates and take them out on 6 hour passes to Church and Bible Study. I give God all of the credit for any good that comes from my life – I take no credit whatsoever. Drug addiction took me to the lowest points in life that a human can go to – I was the scum of the earth, but since the day that I surrendered to Christ, I have been delivered from drug-addiction, alcoholism, and even cigarettes. It has been more than six years now and I continue to place all of my faith and confidence in Jesus Christ. I have found satisfaction and peace in Him. The answer for me is Jesus.

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