



# Update

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## Computers Needed

We need to train the former inmates in the Bible Institute with some basic computer skills. Many if not most jobs today require some use of computers. Without some basic skill, these men and women will be limited after they finish their schooling. If you have, or your business is updating their computers and would be willing to donate them to a worthy project, we would joyfully receive them.

The computers will not be connected to the Internet. They need to be Windows operating systems. Older operating systems will be fine because basic word document and key function is all the goal will be in these classes. The school can put older programs on the computers if needed. If you have one or more to donate, send me an email at the email address below, and I will contact you to make arrangements. It could make a real difference in the availability of employment for these fellow believers after they leave school. ✨

## God doesn't give up!

Randall has been in my class at the Bible Institute since last fall. His testimony is one of making an intellectual decision for Christ, then after leaving jail, knocking around in disobedience and confusion. He later made a full heart confession to Christ; however, he wasn't prepared for the gut wrenching experience that threw him back into a world of darkness. Here is his story about what happened.

Randall was born in a small town which was a northern suburb of Chicago. His dad was a hard-spirited man who grew up in the depression era, came from a broken family, and was very strict with his family. As so often happens, life was hard on him and he was conditioned to be hard on others.

The family did not attend church, but they prayed over the meal and said some prayers at bedtime. Randall's mother seemed

to love everyone, and Randall turned to her when he was in trouble. He said, *I often got a spanking for getting into some kind of mischief.* He was one of four children and his older brother who was nicknamed "Foxy" enjoyed tormenting Randall. His sister and he argued most of the time, and Randall tormented his younger brother. The family lived in a small two-bedroom house which lent itself to "leave my stuff alone!"

Randall started getting into trouble when he was 12 years old. He began by smoking cigarettes, moved to drinking alcohol, advanced to smoking pot, sniffing glue, and popping pills. He deeply longed for the oneness of family with his father, but the situation denied it.

Because he carried resentment toward his father, Randall "struck out" in reaction and resentment toward everyone, and it expressed itself in rebellion. This advanced to trouble with the law.

Although he is responsible for his actions, I can see the work of the enemy who "inspired" him to express his resentment in stealing cars, breaking windows, fighting, and driving without a driver's license. Randall grew up on the poor side of town with friends who were trouble makers as well. The mix was a recipe for conflict and pain, and plenty of it happened.

In a state of turmoil and bitterness, Randall hated school and skipped as often as he could get away with it. When he graduated from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, his diploma was blank, but the school system pushed him on into high school. Two weeks into his freshman year, he decided to abandon school. His father delivered an ultimatum to him and said, *Either go back to school, or get a*

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job, or get out! Randall chose to get a job, but the school board ruled that a 15-year-old must be in school, so they sent him to an alternative school for three hours a day. As soon as he was old enough he left school for good.

In the summer of his eighteenth year, he landed in jail for burglary. During this 72-day stay, a man shared with Randall the gospel of God's saving grace, and Randall prayed the sinner's prayer with him. Randall said, *It was here that the seed of the Lord was planted in my life, and began its process. Even though I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior, I only half-heartedly believed.* The love of God started to work on him and God didn't give up.

Armed only with an intellectual salvation, Randall was not equipped to handle the pain of life and his drug and lawless living continued. During these years of being in and out of jails and prison, Randall would often cry out to God, and amazingly he saw answers to his prayers. He certainly had a wide variety of jobs, he said, *I've done construction work, tree trimming, auto mechanics, building and machine maintenance, worked as a shipping and receiving clerk, fork lift operator, crane operator, front end loader, sky track, and building transmission towers.*

Randall said, *In April of 2002 I hit rock bottom and was back in jail again facing up to 14 years. Sitting in jail, I got tired of being sick and tired. I had finally had enough. I cried out to God wholeheartedly for forgiveness, and accepted Jesus with all my heart. I was truly saved. The Lord opened many doors for me. The parole board agreed for me to go to Teen Challenge in Chicago. I think it was just a couple months before my 40<sup>th</sup> birthday. I was doing fine and letting God*

*have His way. The Lord was truly blessing me. I had a joy and peace I can't fully explain.*

Unfortunately, complications happened. He received a furlough pass to go home for a visit. Arriving home, he found his dad in the hospital approaching death. He went before a judge and got an indefinite furlough to be with his father in those closing days of his life. On a deep level, Randall wanted a deep loving relationship with his father. The hardness was gone from his father, and Randall could feel the love he had so longed for growing up.

Here is the crunch, the indefinite furlough didn't mean he could stay until his father passed, and when his father didn't pass within a certain time, the parole officer ordered him back to Teen Challenge.

That which he so desperately longed for was being taken away, and he went "bananas." He said, *I was so very upset, the night before I was to return to Teen Challenge I let the enemy in and went out and smoked some crack cocaine. Of all things, I didn't go back, and I turned my back on my loving God who had delivered me from my bondage, and went right back to wallowing in the mud. So, for the next 12 years I ran from God, from the law, and I blamed Him for my troubles. I would rant and rave about why my life was so miserable. I would yell in the street, and in anger tell Him if He's real to strike me down! Man, was I ever living in misery. The whole time the Lord would tell me, "Here I am, turn back to Me."*

It took another round in prison for Randall to come to his senses. He was placed in one prison where he prayed for God to please send me to a camp that has

*some Christians in it.* He was placed in the Jim Rudd unit in Brownfield, Texas, and transferred to a dorm where the Lord had someone waiting for him. A man with a Christian testimony named Vern began to persuade him to go to church with him.

Praise God, his Heavenly Father hadn't given up on him.

Randall said, *As soon as I walked into the meeting and heard the music playing I felt the presence of the Lord. And a quiet peaceful voice telling me this is where you belong. I rededicated my life to the Lord, got involved in every class that they offered, which there were several. I got involved with the church, didn't miss a Sunday, or any event, got on the praise team, participated in prayer partners, had a prayer circle of inmates we did every night. And helped in opening the faith based dorm. Man, the Spirit of the Lord is moving in a mighty way in the Rudd unite. In chapel and other activities, Chaplain Flora Kynard was used in my life through the anointing of the Lord working in her.*

Randall found out about Calvary Commission, sent for an application, and was accepted as a student at Calvary Bible Institute. The parole officer agreed, Randall arrived in my class last fall, and has participated in the class in an inspiring way.

He says, *Thank you God. You most certainly work in mysterious ways. Now, I'm getting blessed here. I feel God's love and guidance in this place. I love you Lord, Amen.*

Aren't we thankful God didn't give up on us! ✨

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