

The MISSION AT THE CROSS



Tony Brewer: A Long Hard Road To The Mission

February 2020

Tony Brewer is the second graduate of our newly extended 12 month program. He is in charge of seasonal displays at Hellfighters USA. Please read his testimony below.

I was raised in a petting zoo. This is a bit of an overstatement, as we did not purpose ourselves as such, nor did we make a profit from the environment. In that regard, we were pig farmers. Dad was a man of various trade talents of which he imparted none to me. In retrospect, I think this was for my safety, at least in his eyes. I knew this because he once remarked in my presence to a visitor, "He's not right in the head." To his defense, at some point, I briefly returned to crawling on all fours. To my defense, one day I was playing dinosaur and I realized moving on my knees was easier than getting off my knees. This decision seemed perfectly logical at the time.

I was raised essentially in social solitude which caused a lot of confusion when my Dad would tell me to "act my age." I was self-aware enough to realize I had no point of reference for acceptable behavior. My parents opted to home-school me and my brother which may not have been a bad thing if there had been people to practice my social skills on. I was socially isolated and emotionally unstable maybe with a slight learning disability. I had no driving skills, no people skills and was totally unprepared for the world. Then my parents died in rapid succession before and just after my 16th birthday. While I did enjoy some permanent residence (after their deaths), about three years I think, the majority of that time was spent at rehabs and shelters or with caring people that took pity on me. Also, I spent a healthy amount of time living outdoors on a couch behind a thrift store, under a bridge, and in a handmade tent in the woods. On the streets I would eat from dumpsters or steal when I couldn't find anything. The worst part of being on the streets was the instability.

My parents very briefly entertained a stint as churchgoers, but eventually planted their flag firmly in the "hypocrites go to church" camp. I assume my dad started watching "preacher shows" to supplement this deficit of Jesus in our lives. Both of my parents were professing Christians and towards the end of her life, my mom either rededicated her life or got saved outright at last at some church event we were invited to attend.

I suppose they did cover the importance of heaven and hell, though as a child I did not find either particularly appealing for reasons of poor explanation or understanding on my part. To my mind, heaven was sitting on a cloud in a featureless white sky scape, alone, forever. Pondering this one day, I became anxious to the point of hysteria and my mom, in a rare moment of motherly concern managed to assuage my fears with colorful, if not quite theologically sound reassurances. I didn't finally get saved until I was 18 and living at my first rehab.

If I was to describe my early faith, I would say it was the seed that grew quickly, but withered because I had no roots. I was on fire for Jesus, but with no way to channel it and with questionable guidance I eventually burned out. For the next several years I put faith in the closet. I did not know what to do with it. I flirted with atheism but could not buy it. The truth was in me and I could not shake it, something I would become irrationally upset about. I was logical and intellectual, but I couldn't forget the truth. If nothing else, that is something the Mission has helped me with. From exposure to various preachers and teachers, to me reading my bible on my own free time, the spiritual grounding provided by the Mission has proven as important as the shelter and security here.



Tony (left) at Graduation

Mission At The Cross

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Hellfighters and MATC Visit Fairview Baptist Church



Thanks to Fairview Baptist Church Laurel, MS for hosting Hellfighters and Mission At The Cross this month. Mike Shirley spoke in the service and there was one profession of faith in Christ for salvation.

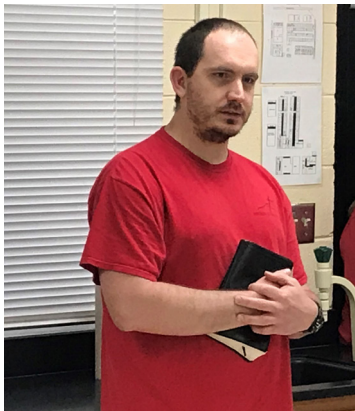


West Jones High Jr. Beta Club Donates to Mission



God is always on time. We were low on coffee and sugar and as always, He came through! The Jr. Beta Club of West Jones High School, Laurel, MS donated sugar, coffee, tea, laundry detergent, and socks, delivered by these lovely young ladies, Kasia Hosey and Lakenzie Graves. Thanks again to the whole organization and sponsors Stephanie Robinson and Susie broom.

Mission Life



Ministering



Praying



Studying



Working



Worshipping



Remembering



Graduating