



# Grace to Youth, Inc.

Reaching out to Youth with the Hope of Christ

January 07, 2026

*Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us.*

*1 Thessalonians 2:8*

An update on what has happened recently (October 1 thru December 31, 2025):

## **Gainesville State School (TJJD):**

- Was able to finally get to go in! Still only allowed in once per month but trying to get that changed. Went in twice over the last couple of months. Still very hard to build relationships and trust only going in once a month. At least at this place they are there for a good while, so that helps. They can be there for over a year – sometimes two. Please help me pray for the youth there and that I will be able to have a bigger impact for the Lord there.

## **Hope Inn Christ (Decatur, TX):**

- A lot of changes have happened at Hope Inn Christ the last few months.
- Last I heard, Josiah who left the program a while back is active in his youth group and told me that he is now a youth leader! The purpose of Hope Inn Christ is to get these guys introduced to the Lord, so that when they do leave, they will continue in the faith for the rest of their lives. But please continue to pray for him. Don't want him to fall back like so many do.
- Cordy has come a long way and is also doing well. Not only did Cordy get his driver's license a short time ago, he also bought a car! He also left the program, but came back after about a week or two. So glad he did. He is the first youth ever to make it to Phase 2. He made it January 1, 2026! He now lives in a camper at the back of Hope Inn Christ. He also needs prayer like the rest of us!
- Joseph also had left the program and had come back. He was gone a month, but stayed in Decatur during his absence. But he also came back as well. He also was able to buy a car! And got a promotion at work. But just a few days ago, he decided to leave again. He has a good job in Decatur and as far as I know is still working there. Please pray for him as well.
- Melody, one of the house parents, went back to TWU in August to get her Masters and has finished her first semester! One more to go. She will start in January. Hopefully, she will do well in her classes. So far, she has been able to get great grades. She also had to intern at Wise Choices Pregnancy Center. She really liked working there.
- The newest news about Joel and Melody (the house parents) is that they are expecting TWINS in July. With a 3-year-old and a 10-month-old, along with any residents, it will probably be pretty challenging. Please keep them all in your prayers. Joel and Melody are still doing a fantastic job in running Hope Inn Christ!

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### **TDCJ (Adult Prisons, all over TX):**

- Still keeping in touch with Angel. He is still in a unit in south Texas. We are still communicating when he can call me. He is still working in the kitchen preparing dinner. He has signed up to take 3 college classes starting in January. He has not changed from the Muslim faith. That really bothers me and is a HUGE setback from what I am trying to teach him. No telling what he is learning. Our last conversation went well, but he hasn't changed. I wish I could call him, but I can't. PLEASE PRAY for him to re-consider and come to faith in the Lord.

### **Tarrant County Juvenile Services (Fort Worth, TX):**

- Have been working with C and D pods when I can. This has gotten better over the last couple of months. I still try to go to both dorms, but very rarely does that happen. Please pray that I will be able to go to both dorms. Again, it is hard for relationships to happen and build when I can't be consistent. These youth don't stay too long, so I really try my best to make a good godly impact while I am there.
- The staff seems to be coming around to letting me do other things in speaking to the youth. This is GREAT progress. This helps give the youth knowledge they need, but also goes a LONG way in establishing them to trust me and what I say. I was supposed to speak to them during the break at Christmas, but that didn't happen. Still praying for the youth and more access.

### **Denton Freedom House (Aubrey, TX):**

- Still going to Denton Freedom House and mentoring a young man there. Again, this is a Christian discipleship program – just like Teen Life Challenge in Desoto where I was for 7 years. It of course is run differently, but it's a great program for people on drugs, alcohol, or just wanting to get closer to God. I try to go to some of their activities and they also run a Coffee Shop in Denton. I sometimes get to work with the men there. Pray that I can be more actively involved with them.
- Riley is the young man I mentor. He is doing well. He just made the third (and final) phase! He was able to move to a house in Denton that he will share with 4 others from DFH. He still has a job doing landscaping and also referees at baseball games. He has now been in the program for a full year and is doing real well. I try to be a blessing to him and the other men in the program.

### **Adult and Teen Challenge (Desoto, TX):**

- Still working with Teen Challenge to get this new program for the second phase to work. Just got matched again with one of the young men. It has gone well so far. He works for Denny's right now, but will soon be changing to a warehouse job. He will get more hours and also have some experience he can take to his next job. His name is Jayden. He is learning more and more about the Lord! Please pray for him and that I can be a real blessing to him.

**ONLY** in HIS strength,  
Ernie Black  
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And again, THANK YOU for your continued prayers and support. Below are some areas of prayer needs that are on my heart at this time. Some requests you have seen before as they still apply!

**Praises:**

- Just for the opportunity to work with and encourage these youth and young men!
- Praise for the protection God has afforded me over many miles while traveling to these places.
- Praise for the opportunity to return to Tarrant County Juvenile Services!
- Praise for the youth/young men that have been released and are still walking with the Lord!
- A lot of the men continue to grow in their walk with the Lord. I have been able to see quite an improvement in most of them! So proud they are walking with the Lord – but please keep them in your prayers!
- Got to speak extra in Tarrant County Juvenile! Would like to spend more time with them, though.

**Prayer Requests:**

- Pray that when we share the gospel that it would be accurate and with the love of God, that we would speak clearly, and that the hearts of the young men would be open to hear and respond to God's word.
- Please pray for the young men at Gainesville State School, Tarrant County Juvenile, Denton Freedom House, Hope Inn Christ, Adult and Teen Challenge, and those in prison and in county jails, for their hearts to be open and for them to come to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.
- That the Lord continues to use me to speak and work with these youth and young men.
- Pray for Cordy at Hope Inn Christ. Also Josiah and Joseph who have left recently.
- Pray for Riley, Jonathan, Dalton, and Ronnie at Denton Freedom House.
- Please pray that I may be a real blessing to these youth and young men.
- Please pray for the staff and administrators at TJJD (Gainesville and Tarrant County) and Hope Inn Christ (especially Melody, as she juggles family, school and ministry), and Denton Freedom House.
- Please pray that I will use the opportunities that God gives me for His glory and that I don't mess it up!
- Please pray for Elijah, Jeremiah, Justin, David, and Mario in Tarrant County Juvenile.
- Please pray for Hunter, James, Ethan, and Jordan at Gainesville State School.
- Pray for Angel – that he would give his life to Christ and reject this Muslim faith.