

HOW THE WINGARD HOME WAS STARTED

THE PERSONAL TESTIMONY

OF

ROY & CHARLOTTE WINGARD

IN THE BEGINNING

Roy (my husband) and I met in November of 1987 at a dance bar on the Ross Barnett Reservoir in Madison, Mississippi. Roy was in Jackson working on a temporary welding job from Birmingham, Alabama: I (then Charlotte Savage) was a local business owner totally immersed in my business, my children, and making money. We were both going through divorces. Misery loves company, so we moved in with each other; and so began eight months of agony and swift decline. During this time, we moved to Greenville, South Carolina, with my two small children and six thousand dollars cash left from the sale of my idol (my business). My addiction now became Roy and Roy's addiction, drugs and alcohol, consumed all the money and more in only three months time.....and we all ended up homeless in Atlanta, Georgia in the sweltering summer of 1988.

THE SOLUTION

Becoming homeless was, without question, the best thing that could have happened! Revs. John and Carrol Quinn of Lawrenceville, Georgia took us into their home and began to minister the love of God to us through meeting our physical and our mental needs and then...spiritual needs were met because of the Quinn's witness and actions. Roy and I were ministered to for several months and both came to know Jesus Christ as our personal Savior in that little homeless ministry in Gwinnett County, Georgia.

THE GREAT COMMISSION

Roy and I were married by the Quinns at the Ministry on October 14, 1988. After training under the Quinns for two years, God told us to "GO YE !!" to Jackson, Mississippi! "NOOOOOO!" I replied to the commission given to us! "God, I love Atlanta and working here in the Quinn House Ministry! You said you want me to serve and this is where I want to serve!" I was then in the permissive will of God and I became so miserable and unsatisfied with life and ministry, that I learned to submit through trial and error. My heart ached to be in the perfect will of the one who delivered me out of the grip of the enemy. That is when I said without reserve...."here I am, LORD, send me!" We moved to Jackson Mississippi and opened our first home for the homeless, battered, abandoned, displaced and for children in need of supervision. As missionaries, we came to what we thought WAS a foreign land. In October of 1990 all the "legal" paperwork was completed and thus began the work at Signs & Wonders Ministry / Wingard Home. By Thanksgiving of that year, we were giving thanks with a house full of folks who needed Jesus and had found a haven from the storm at 745 North Congress Street. By Christmas, our "old" home which was rented with grace and elbow grease, sported a new coat of paint, curtains made from sheets, and was run by a family who had a heart for the homeless because we had been homeless.

THE VISION GROWS

Our home remained on Congress Street for six years. Thousands of people were touched by God's love as they come through our doors. Our rules are strict (with lots of love mixed in) and the program works for the ones who truly want help. Even the ones who fail are touched by God's love so they know the answers....they just choose not to be successful...but the seed is planted! In May of 1996, Wingard Home moved to purchased property at 1279 North West Street. We now inhabit two two-story dwellings and a single-story duplex all nestled inside an eight foot wooden security fence. There is a large yard, a vegetable garden, flower gardens surrounding a small waterfall and fountain, a small wood working and machine shop, a clothing closet, a food pantry, a walk-in freezer, a small chapel, a meeting room, a basketball court, a small office, a commercial type kitchen, and living areas for 60 people....right smack in the middle of the capitol city of Jackson.

TO GOD BE THE GLORY!!

Our family claims absolutely NO credit for the growth of the Ministry or for the miracles one can see every day around our home. Roy and I are missionaries, vessels for God's life-changing miracles and we are dedicated to the ministry to the point that we live on the property at the main campus so that we are always near the homeless and needy we serve. We are at or on-call for the ministry twenty-four hours a day, every day of the year. We will be quick to tell you that we have never been so happy and that we love what we are doing and it is a sweet, peaceful place to be in the perfect will of God.

WHAT DO WE DO ??

Roy and I, after having been through high school, college, trade school, the school of "hard knocks", and two years of intensive training under the Quinns; have (for the past 24 years in Jackson) shown people who are hurting and in trouble, how to break the yoke of poverty, abuse, and addiction that make them homeless and destitute. We take whomever comes needing help, as long as they are able and willing to get a full time job and to make an effort. We take men, women & children, married couples, pregnant teens, fathers with children and single women, and women rescued from human trafficking. These people are then clothed, fed, sheltered, counseled, schooled, and cared for absolutely free of charge. In return, they have to work a job, save their money, go by the rules, and make an effort to recognize and to work on the problems that caused them to be lost and homeless.

The teens come to us through the youth courts and are ruled CHINS or delinquents. They come to us abused, neglected, rebellious, angry, strung-out, and have NO respect for themselves, their parents, authority, or their peers. Roy & I become substitute parents/grandparents to these kids and treat them as much like our own as is possible.

Each day, our lives are full of activities, duties, and challenges as we bring the GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST AND THE PLAN OF SALVATION TO A HURT AND DYING WORLD....AND OUR "GREAT

COMMISSION” STARTS RIGHT INSIDE OUR OWN FRONT DOOR.

WHAT ABOUT HAVING CHILDREN & THE AMERICAN FAMILY DREAM?

While we were serving in ministry, Roy and I have had five children, so we have a total of 7 we have reared together in the inner city ministry. Roy had two who we did not have the pleasure of having in our family unit but on special or adverse occasions. All our children are now over the age of 18. All five of our children together were born and reared in the inner city. We now boast 14 grandchildren and we are, indeed, growing old together, growing old in this inner city ministry, but the very best thing I hope people remember about our life is the perfect story, now as we are growing old with Jesus!

CHARLOTTE... *“Each day is a new adventure with endless opportunities to let God use you to change people’s lives for the better. Moving into the future, growing old with Jesus! ”*

ROY... *“Seeing people work the program and succeed is really what a payday is all about....
We are giving people a hand-up instead of a hand-out!!”*