



Front Row Left to Right: Michael Lafuente, Jeff Armstrong, Juan Peguero, Mike Schubert, Casey Lumpkin
Second Row Left to Right: Darrell Long, Christian Cullison, Alan Thrift

"I remember my affliction and my wandering...I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope:

Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness." – Lamentations 3:19-23

Jeremiah wrote these words as he sat amidst the rubble and ashes of Jerusalem. King Nebuchadnezzar and his army from Babylon had just devastated the city and the situation the Israelites found themselves in was bleak to say the least. Most were taken captive and the remaining people were left behind in a city that was demolished. His soul was downcast as he considered their plight; yet, in the middle of this adversity, he embraced hope.

He recognized that, despite the destruction they were contending with, God's love and compassion were fully evident. There were 'new mercies' to lay hold of and he could see that only because of God's grace were they not consumed totally. God's faithfulness was there to uphold them in a most distressing moment.

Many of us, including the graduates pictured above, came to our senses in a similar place. Due to self-affliction, our lives and relationships were obliterated and there appeared to be no hope. Yet, as Jeremiah called to mind, we too became aware of the fact that God's grace is what delivered us. Because of Him and His loving kindness were we saved from the throes of death and destruction and granted a new opportunity to live in Him.

The question I must consider is, "Do I absorb the reality of His mercy and do I recognize the depths of His loving kindness?" If I do, then my heart will turn towards Him. Paul writes in Romans 2:4, "...do you show contempt for the riches of His kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?"

May my heart be tuned in to His mercy and may I sing:

**"Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father
There is no shadow of turning with Thee
As Thou hast been, Thou forever will be...
Morning by morning new mercies I see
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.**

"You, Lord, took up my case; You redeemed my life." (Lamentations 3:58)



Nick

“ I come from fifteen years of addiction, doing whatever made me feel good. My family lost both of my brothers, and my mother and I were both on the verge of death using drugs and alcohol to cope with this trauma. I destroyed my marriage and lied to everyone. The Lord closed every door in my life except for Dunklin. Here, I gained an intimate relationship with the Lord. He restored my marriage. He has given me purpose, peace, and joy like I have never had before. Today, the Lord continues to restore my family and my relationships, which I could have never done on my own. I am grateful today for my blessed life. ”

- *Michael Lafuente*

“ I have struggled with addiction for seventeen years. I abandoned my wife and my three boys. My decisions destroyed every relationship in my life. Since being drawn to Dunklin, God has restored my life and my family. I am now becoming the husband and the father He created me to be. Only Christ could put my life and family back together. Because of Him, I now have purpose and I want to give Him all of the glory. ” - *Casey Lumpkin*

“ I was a hopeless mess before coming to Dunklin. I was angry, alienated from God, and had no desire to live. Death and destruction left a void in my life that I filled with drugs and alcohol for seven years. I now have a life today as well as a hope for the future. I can love and be loved. The Lord has walked me through my pain and restored my family. I have freedom from the bondage and darkness I was living in, and it is all because of God’s grace and mercy. ” - *Christian Cullison*

“ I was in a fifteen year addiction to opiates. When I came to Dunklin I was on the verge of divorce. My daughter struggled with anxiety as a result of my behavior. Since being here, the Lord has restored my marriage and my daughter has opened up to me. Upon graduating, my wife and I are committed to outside family development. I am excited that I get to be the husband and father that God has called me to be. ” - *Jeff Armstrong*



Please consider this a personal invitation to come and celebrate our 60th Annual Homecoming with us. Festivities begin Friday night, March 4th, and continue through Sunday afternoon. Please notice our Facebook page or use the following link, www.Dunklin.org/events, for a more detailed description of times and events. Thank all of you for being a special part of the Dunklin family. We look forward to seeing you.

