

IEACA NEWS GRAM

SPOTLIGHT

Benjamin S. and the Recovery in the Desert Movement

I first met the man that many of us know as Brother Benjamin S. in the year of 2005. The man would set the podium ablaze, speaking with a passion and resoluteness that many of us admire. Ben S. was one of the founding members of the Recovery in Desert (RITD) meeting held on Friday nights in the city of Moreno Valley. Recently, I was able to

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catch up with Ben S. and ask him about the formative years of RITD and their emergence in the IEACA. I asked Benjamin S. what motivated him to start the RITD meeting on Friday nights. He replied, “When I moved to Moreno Valley I had about 8 years sober and I would travel to L.A. to go to meetings. There was only one C.A. meeting in the Riverside/Moreno Valley and when I attempted to attend the meeting, I discovered that it went dark. I prayed and went to meetings in L.A. for about 2 years and God told me through prayer to start a meeting

in Moreno Valley. I didn’t know where to start the meeting, but God, told me to start the meeting in my garage.” I asked Benjamin S. about the early challenges of the meetings. He responded, “Some of the early challenges were restroom access (because it was at my house), smoking accommodations because I lived in a cul-de-sac and I was a part of a home association. I was concerned about my neighbors and inconveniencing them with all the cars out front. In addition, the meeting was hard to find because it was not off a bus route, so you had to walk off the beaten path to get to it....When God is in it you can’t fail. And I was not operating on what I felt and what I thought. Because I was afraid. I was totally in fear about what I felt and what I thought.” The meeting grew from the garage and people were coming from all over the Inland Empire to attend because they heard a message of hope. The meeting grew out of the garage and migrated to a church, a hospital, a suite at March Air Force Base and ultimately to its current meeting place at 24187 Postal Ave., Moreno Valley, Ca. I asked him about the RITD meeting serving as the catalyst for the host of

BIRTHDAYS

Nakea B. 3/12/07

Imani A. 3/12/93

Benjamin S. 3/13/87

Tim B. 3/20/05

other meetings that would spring up in the Inland Empire. His response, “My vision was to have at least twelve meetings. Ideally, I wanted to have 3 meetings a day, 7 days a week in Moreno Valley.” The vision has been fulfilled through work and effort. Meetings have sprouted up in San Bernardino, Corona, Moreno Valley, Temecula, Riverside and other cities throughout the Inland Empire. Through Benjamin S.’ example, many of us have been afforded the opportunity to recover from drug and alcohol addiction. I personally can attest to Benjamin S.’ willingness to serve at all cost--- to see to the next man or woman get freedom from addiction. RITD is more than just a meeting now; it is a *movement*. All movements require action and sacrifice. Benjamin S. has done both, he has planted the seeds, he has made the sacrifices to tend the garden, and now behold: **the fruit**. Pray and Keep Moving newcomer and old-timers alike, and welcome to the movement.

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