



## James David Elder

September 21, 1990 - May 13, 2020

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Our beloved, baby James was freed from the chains of addiction and returned home to his Heavenly Father and Mother on May 13, 2020. We wish we could say he died peacefully, surrounded by people who loved him, but that's not usually the case when someone loses a battle with addiction. Those who survive him will forever be haunted by the image of the reality of his death. He was alone, in a cold dark place, far from home.

Many knew James only through the lens of the addictions he battled for years. That wasn't the real James. He was a beautiful baby, a beautiful boy. He had a brilliant mind and loved to make people laugh. Those fortunate enough to truly know him immediately recognized him as one who would give the clothes he was wearing to help a friend in need. One who ended nearly every conversation with those he cared for with "love you."

James had a huge heart and a sensitive soul. He felt deeply the sorrows of other people and the world. As a child, he loved jumping on the trampoline, reading with his Dad, playing cops and robbers, and all kinds of animals. He carried on the legacy of his grandparents with his love and talent for music. He showed great proficiency on the saxophone, guitar and piano. As an adult, he loved to be a kid with his nieces and nephews and to act as a protector for all those in his life.

To the person who doesn't understand addiction, he is just another statistic who made bad decisions. For the people who do understand, this is our baby. He was a brother, a son, a cousin, an uncle, a friend, a human being with an addiction. Drugs told him "I can make you feel accepted, I can make you feel worthy, I can make you feel normal. I can take away your pain and make you feel nothing." What it didn't tell him was how it would steal his life, devastate his family and cause unimaginable pain. How it would take his job and leave him penniless and homeless. How it would take his humor, his spark and smile. How it would take and take and take, until it took his life. James never wanted to be defined

only by his addiction and his mistakes, but drugs took him to a place we could not find him. To a place he didn't want to be found.

The day James died, a part of us died along with him. We will miss him every day for the rest of our lives. The pain of his death is heartbreaking and intolerable, which is why stories like James' should not be ignored. If his story can help one person decide to change their life.. to be brave enough to seek help and fight to regain control of their life, James will not have died in vain.

We rejoice in the knowledge that our baby's suffering has finally ended. Ours will have no end until that time we embrace James in the halls of heaven and look into the eyes of our peaceful and happy boy when he welcomes us home.

If you knew and loved James and it would help you to say goodbye, his family would like to invite you to come spend a few minutes with him Wednesday evening from 6-8pm. Please text Summer Goodro for details (801) 897-4204.

# Comments

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“ As a police officer I spent a fair amount of time with James over the last year. We got along and for whatever reason he always seemed to come back to reality when I arrived. I saw the kind sweet soul underneath the addiction. I will miss knowing him. My thoughts and prayers go out to his parents and friends.

**John** - June 09, 2020 at 02:25 AM

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“ I went to high school with James and enjoyed his talent for the saxophone. I am saddened to hear of his passing and I know your message about overcoming addiction will help someone who is struggling or has a loved one who is struggling find hope. Good bless you and your family

**Bryce Spencer** - May 29, 2020 at 11:43 PM

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“ I didn't know your son, but was touched by his story that you shared in his obituary. My heart breaks for him & for you. I know He is in the Father's arms in Heaven & finally filled with joy. I pray God comforts all of you who loved your son & brother until you meet again. Kim C.

**Kim Chaffin** - May 24, 2020 at 01:49 AM