



Malone, Florida

I lived a rough life because of my own actions. Since I was young I believed in God. I believed that He sent Jesus for me, and others, and He was raised from the dead after His crucifixion. I have lied, done, drugs, run with the wrong people, and I know through that God had a purpose for me, I just didn't understand that. The only thing that is different now is I live life. I am thankful for that and He set me apart through Jesus. I went through paranoia in my life which caused a lot of other problems. I was running everywhere so scared of everything. Around me my relationships are not all that good. I cannot blame the others I was with. In a lot of ways, I learned not to point fingers at anyone. The people I went to see told me my problem came from a chemical imbalance. I know that some of my folks told me that they had the same thing that happened to them. I was in and out of jail and prison at this time in my life. I always trusted in God to bring me through everything. I stopped looking towards people and started to pray more and asked for Him to guide me in the right direction. He put a lot of different people in my life but one thing I know now is that when God said that all things will work to the good to those who love God, that it is true. I know that for sure. I have experienced it for myself and I know now that is so true. Now I know the loving kindness of God. He loves

everyone and if you will trust and believe in Jesus, surrender yourself to Him, He will draw near to you. So with the Holy Spirit He gives us, the Spirit will help cleanse us. You have to ask Him and He will help you, but you have to have faith and believe, truly believe. The Spirit will show you things you need to work on, and the one thing I know is that in order to not do the thing that has a strong hold on you, you just have to stop. It is easier said than done so this I know from experience but it is so true. You can do it. You can conquer what you don't want to do through Jesus Christ which strengthens you in your weaknesses. It doesn't matter what the strongholds are. Remember that God loves you, and Jesus, and they're always watching over you to help you. But you have to be willing to change. The one thing I was doing was seeing the kingdom of God and His righteousness so I picked myself up and tried again. At one time I just wanted to give up. I am thankful God didn't allow me to do that, He was carrying me through. It was not easy to do this, I know it was so hard when I was trying. Satan was there to try and make me fall, I did so many times. So many temptations so many people being angry with me having attitudes with me at times, I lashed out. I started to pray more and get in my Bible every day, asking God to help me in the name of Jesus. I wanted to change, really change. I saw myself for what I was.

Now with God, I don't have a temper problem. I contacted some of my folks and asked them to forgive me. I love them so, I finally was able to let go of feelings that I bottled up and not think about them, but God helped me to face everything and let go of things and forgive others and myself. I know it is so hard to forgive yourself though. I still asked God to help me and guide me in the right path. I am so thankful. He pulled me up and helped me. Remember this, God is always there for you, you just have to be willing and have faith and come to Him with a humble spirit.
J.H.

Pearce, MS

Two years ago I began to hear voices that spoke to me that no one else could perceive. They began by telling me they were aliens, and they could only speak to me, out of all others, because of some special quality of my brain. As things progressed, they used mimicry to emulate the voices of people I know and love or others from my past. I heeded them. They knew all my secrets and read my thoughts. One day they told me that they were God. In my godless state, I believed them. They told me one morning as I was smoking grass that they were God and they wanted me to remove my eye from my head. Believing this to be God. I did not ask why or what for or when, but did it with my own hand. I then fell on my knees, calling out to God when I could not find the

strength to tear off the nerve and root of it, begging Him for His forgiveness for my weakness. This happened two years ago. I was moved to a new facility, when God called me to get in my Bible. I humbled myself before Him. I came to Him more sure of my damnation than my salvation, which is a good way to come to Him, as it's where we would be without Him. The serpent bruises our heel, then we are driven to run into the arms of Jesus. I'd like to add that these evil spirits allowed to inflict me, appealed to a single nature and in all manner of ways. They can cause sensations on your flesh when He allows them to. God used it all to make me hate sin. But He says He won't leave us entirely unpunished. I was a lustful liar, so I had demons that lied to me and caused me to feel lust even when I did not want it or seek it. We do indeed reap what we sow. He accepted my broken spirit and caused me to have a contrite heart. Now I seek Him diligently each day, and find Him at my door, just as He promised. I know all my righteousness is as filthy rags before His holy, and ever faithful self. I fall short, but He is always there. I love him more than I knew it was possible to love, and His love overflows to cause me to love everyone around me. Even those who hate me. He told us He could cause these things. He simply does not lie.

F.H.

Tennessee Colony, TX

I grew up in a Christian home with my grandparents and one of my brothers. However, I faced verbal, emotional, and physical abuse from my grandmother,

despite the fact that she and my grandfather were ordained ministers. I grew up feeling unloved, unwanted, and worthless. Although I knew of Jesus, and considered myself saved, I had no real relationship or life change. I struggled heavily with pornography for several years. I had no self-esteem and bottled up my emotions. I eventually graduated from college and got married. My battle with porn developed into utilizing prostitutes as well. In 2014, I was separated from the US Navy after six years of service and became a sex offender. I went to therapy, and despite the fact that my relationship with my wife became a bit better, I spiraled into a deep depression, and had many negative self-thoughts. I had considered suicide on a couple of occasions. I could feel God pulling at me, but I refused to forgive myself, so I pushed God away. My pornography problems remained, but I felt God calling often. In 2021, I was arrested for the second time and this time sentenced to 12 years in prison. My wife of 14 years decided to divorce, although not on bitter or angry terms. While in country jail, I reaccepted Christ as my Savior and decided that I would pick up my cross and live by obedience to His Word and will. I now read my Bible a lot, and I have become a very serious student of it. My prayer life is growing and I am now paying attention and seeing how God is answering my prayers and providing for me. Control has been a huge issue in my life, but I am learning how to leave it in God's hands. In prison, I have no control of

my environment, but I can let God change how I handle the environment. I am seeing growth and progress in my walk. I still struggle with impure thoughts but thank God I haven't been able to view porn for over a year. I am working on getting baptized in accordance with God's Word. I am also praying to get into the faith-based dorm on my unit. I'm starting to have the peace of God in my life for the first time. I have a long way to go, but I am hopeful that God will use me to help build His kingdom and church. I thank God that He does not see me by my criminal history or failures, but as His child. Although I still have bad days, I am learning to turn those over to Him and trust. I am learning to let go of the past, quit worrying about the future and to live in today. I thank God that He isn't done with me yet. I would encourage anybody to give their life to Christ today. God bless.

B.C.

"For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:"

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