



Ocala, FL

I was twenty-two when I caught this charge, I was pregnant with my second daughter and knew that I would be facing prison time and that I would not be part of my daughter's lives for some years, possibly fifteen years. I was very grieved in spirit, anxious, and completely broken when I finally got to prison. I was just so, so broken, so hurt, so worried. I came to the firm conclusion that while in prison I would seek the Lord with all my heart, because that's the only thing that would give me peace. I knew the Lord before prison but did not follow Him, which is what led me here. For the first few weeks I was in prison all I did was pray to God, read His Word, and cry out to Him. I just couldn't see the light at the end of the tunnel. I felt broken, hopeless, and the only peace and hope I got was when I read His Word. After a few weeks of going to church services, crying out to God, and staying in His Word, I went to a particular church service, one that would change my life forever. Prior to this service, I kept seeing the verse, "Spiritual blessings in heavenly places" found in Eph. 1:3. Little pamphlets, scripture cards, it was like this verse kept coming to me, and literally "popping out" to me. But when I walked into the chapel that day, I could feel His presence, and all I wanted to do was worship Him in song and cry. A song came on, and the words to the song were talking about how God's will for our life is best, and how the singer was sorry for not following the Lord. So I'm standing in the pew, eyes closed, hands lifted, crying my eyes out, telling the Lord I was sorry,

and repenting, and asking Him to help me. And, boom, in that second, I had this vision, this revelation if you will. I do believe I was transported to a "Heavenly place" and everything was white, and all I see is me. I'm very skinny, as if I'd been fasting, and my clothes were torn, like sackcloth, and I was hunched over, with this torn rag in my hands, and the torn rag had tangible things on it, like a sphere, pyramid, cylinder, and cube. These things represented my anxieties, my hurt, my deep pain, my expectations, my shame, and my hopelessness. I was like I knew exactly what each thing was or symbolized as if I could put these spiritual burdens into a tangible, touchable thing. So I'm holding all these things and all I feel in my body and spirit is brokenness and pain. I'm so weary and tired, I feel like I don't want to carry these burdens anymore, so I look down at my dirty, torn clothes and I fall on my knees and place the cloth of things on the ground. In that exact moment, like immediately, I was transformed into the child figure of myself and I FELT it. I was running, my hands wide open. The feelings of loneliness and abandonment and pain were all gone, all I felt was this intense desire to be loved. I was running forward, and Jesus was in front of me. He was so bright and He had his arms wide open, waiting to embrace me. I felt so light, so free, and when I finally reached His arms and ran into them, He embraced me, I felt so much love, I felt complete and whole and loved. All I ever wanted. So eventually I opened my eyes and I couldn't believe what had just happened. But that was a spiritual blessing in heavenly places, how I

came to Him heavy, burdened, weary, and how when I finally laid it at His feet, He transformed me into a child and loved me and completed me. That vision was the best moment of my life and from there on out my heart has just wanted to feel His love more than anything.

A.B.

Huntsville, TX

I came from a very blessed Christian home. I had two living parents and an older brother and sister. I was spoiled in being able to have almost anything my heart desired, and then some. But me being the unpredictable kid that I was, thought I deserved more. I felt that I wasn't getting the one-on-one attention I wanted. So I started rebelling at about the age of eleven or twelve. I started smoking and constantly lying to my parents. Me and my friends started skipping school almost every day to go smoke and just drive around looking for trouble. My parents tried taking away my car, got me special help in school, and even went to see counselors. But that didn't matter, I thought I had an image to uphold, not even realizing that my longtime friends weren't even my friends anymore. I started getting angry for no reason. I would throw things and even punch and kick holes in the wall. I ran away a couple times, I was just angry at the world. So this went on until my senior year and I dropped out of school. I started using meth and thought I was hiding it pretty well but I was wrong. My loving parents were at their ends and didn't know how to handle me, so they just loved me and watched me decline. I finally moved out,

bouncing from place to place, using drugs. I ended up getting busted for possession in 2000. I went to a halfway house for three months, but only a month into it I was already using. But I made it though. I was in and out and after finishing parole in 2010, I felt free at last. Times should have been better, but no, I just started using more every day. I lost my job and started bouncing between jobs, not being able to support my family. But we did start going to church. Now I loved this church, I was living the better lifestyle and had me a nice motorcycle and this church was all for Christian Bikers. The church did wonders for me and my family and I ended up joining the motorcycle club. But this whole time I was still using meth and I would even go to church high. Honestly, I wanted everything the church and God had to offer me and my family. I even got baptized for the second time in my life. This should have been the best time in my life, but it wasn't because I didn't give everything to Jesus. The devil still had a hold on me. My relationship with my wife got really bad and my drug use was every day. We had a horrible argument and she ended up leaving with the kids. She filed a divorce and I wasn't allowed to see my kids until I was clean. But I kept using anyway because I was so hurt. In 2012 I got locked up for writing and cashing a stolen check. I got out after nine months and started on drugs again. I had my ups and downs with it, but I've also been really involved with my church and church services. I went through many church/faith-based programs. Now I've been locked back up since 2021. I wake up every morning and am in my Bible with my Lord. That is one thing through everything I've been through, I've never lost my faith in Him. I have many times turned my back on Him and tried to do things my way, but I know and I

believe He has never left me and always has me in His hands.

R.M.

Humble, TX

A bit over three years ago, I found myself homeless and living on the streets of downtown Houston. I had a little part-time job, but wasn't working enough hours to survive. So I resorted to one thing I knew would make enough money to keep me afloat. I started selling fake weed and the money was good. The money came fast and spent easy. Then COVID-19 hit and it seemed like the world crushed. Everyone that had been purchasing started to disappear one by one; so I knew I needed another source of income. That's when I took some of my profit money, and started buying other drugs to push. Then I went and got my unemployment, and went and bought a car, which took me from sleeping on the streets to now sleeping in my car. Meanwhile, someone mentioned to me about a job, going to Louisiana to clean up after a storm. So, as soon as I had enough money saved up to leave, I packed up and took off. After working for about a week I got into a wreck and my car got towed. So I made my way back to Houston and started slanging again. This time though I wasn't sleeping; I had enough money to get into hotel rooms. I was in a room for about two months until one of my customers offered me a place to stay. I lived there with him for nine months or so until me and one of his other room-mates got into a fight, and I was forced to move. From there, I went back to the streets of downtown. I knew things were beginning to spiral out of control so I went to the one person I knew could fix it all. I got down on my knees and asked God to help me. He answered my prayer and a week later, the Salvation Army came

through the campsite, placing people inside apartments. Instead of taking the blessing, as God's way of saving me, I moved in and started slanging more dope than I was at first. Within two months of being there, I got robbed at gunpoint, but that didn't stop me. I was still out there thuggin'. Until the night God said he had had enough. A group of young men ran in on me with the intent to kill me, but God had other plans. One of them shot me in the foot, and they took off. While healing I was approached by investigators to question me about what had happened. Because I had an outstanding warrant, I was taken into custody. Sitting inside a single man cell, left with nothing but a Bible in my thoughts, I decided to get my life back to Christ, and I have been on the right path ever since.

D.Y.

I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. I sought the Lord and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. Psalm 34:1-8

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