



Butner, NC

I grew up poor with not much of anything, sometimes going days without food, and months without housing. I grew up in a seaport up north, in an old fishing city, rundown and full of drugs. At five years old, in 1985, I knew what freebasing coke was. I watched my father and uncles fight cop in my grandma's yard, and was sexually assaulted by a neighbor and family. You would think it could not get worse, but it did. My whole childhood was full of mental, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. My whole life I was in and out of church. I thought I knew God, sometimes I hated Him, blamed Him for what happened to me, and what I went through. But all of this was silent in my head. I held everything in. I grew up and started a family in 2000. I drank very, very heavily, and had been smoking marijuana since I was young. I covered my problem with drugs, alcohol, sex, work, and anything to keep busy. I did everything but turn my life over to God. I was never mentally, physically, or emotionally abusive, and I tried to help everyone. I even helped to get people to Church. Then I started to be sexually abusive to my stepdaughter, not understanding what I was doing. I knew what I did was wrong, but could not help myself. I always provided everything that my family needed and wanted, until at 23 years old, she told her mom, my wife (ex now) what happened. I was arrested and my life was over. Thinking of killing myself, I had lost my loved ones and had nothing. My mom spent \$100 on a search for a Truth Word Aflame KJV Bible for me, but I wanted nothing to do with it. I

knew the Bible, I knew God, and I blamed Him for my failures and my sins as well as the sins against me. I was at my lowest. I had hurt the people that I loved. All I did was cry, until one night in 2021, I just said "God please help me." That night I had a dream. I was lost in a crowd of people. Then I heard a voice, distant, but still there, "Follow me" .. I looked around then to see a man, walking away, beckoning to me with his hand. "Follow me" he said again. So I started fighting my way to him. I never could reach him, but never lost sight either and he kept saying "Follow me". I said, "Yes Lord" finally and woke up. My Bible was laying open beside me and I noticed the verse Matthew 8:21-22.

1. His disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.
2. But Jesus said unto him, follow me, and let the dead bury their dead.

I knew at that moment that I needed to put away my past, repent of my sins, turn my life to the Lord and follow Him! Since then, I have forgiven what was done to me and asked God to forgive me for all that I have done and thought about doing. Now I live for Him and study to show myself approved. I can never make up for my past, but with God, I can help make a better future, spreading His word and growing His kingdom. I think Him every day for showing himself to me. **B. M.**

Woodville, TX

Well, I've been saved since 1992! It has and still is the best experience in my life. At first, I tried to uphold the law, then years and years later I came to find out that we

believers cannot uphold the law on our own. The Ten Commandments show what our sin looks like in a mirror - nothing but dirt. The law is to show our sinful nature. Then I came to find out that all I had to do was rest in the Lord and let God do everything! This was hard at first as our flesh is always wanting to take care of it now! It's all about trusting in the Lord to take care of our issues. And always remember that you are righteous in God's eyes in Christ Jesus. Remember that your sins are forgiven, and our heavenly father doesn't remember our past sins. God is looking at his son's finished work on the cross. Our heavenly father sees His son's blood on us who believe in His son Jesus Christ. Thank you, Lord for taking our sins upon yourself and importing your righteousness upon us and all who believe in you. **G. V.**

Oregon, IL

Praise Be to my Savior

Praise your holy, worthy name.
You, Lord, always stay the same.
But magnificent in your glory,
That tells of a true story.

Praise your holy, worthy name.
You, Lord, always stay the same
There is so much truth in your light
Thank you, Lord, for morning, noon
and night.

Thank you, Lord, for your great
mercy and grace
That none can replace.
Oh, how wonderful is your amazing,
Abundant love from above.
Oh Lord, my God, I put my trust in
you.

I'm letting go of my strife and living my life in you.

Praise your holy, holy name,
Worthy, worthy is my God,
The precious lamb that was slain.
Praise your holy, worthy name.

S.S.

Jesus, my all

My tears may fall,
But Jesus is my all.
So I will stand tall and,
Persevere through it all.
My suffering is not in vain,
'Cause Jesus knows my pain.
Through mercy and grace
That not one can replace,
I have come to be a brand new me
In Christ, I will be..
Forever free in thee. **S. S.**

Seminole, FL

Six years ago, I was sentenced to five years in TDC and I went down there thinking that it would be a cakewalk and that I didn't need anybody or anything. Well, regardless to say that I went down there and things continually got rougher and rougher. I ended up getting in trouble again with serious consequences over a bunch of minor write ups. I was already in GS which is high custody and a 24-hour lockup all day, every day in a cell for months on end. I ended up doing 10 months in a Cell 24/7, getting out once maybe twice a week to shower, but many weeks we couldn't shower. The crazy part is that was the best or easiest part of all the time that I did because I found my way back to God. It's incredible how many things He showed me from behind a cell door. Unfortunately, I fell out of it before I got out when a bunch of drugs came back to the dungeon, as we call it. When I fell out of it, I always felt like I would be a hypocrite if I went back and I blamed Him for

some of the bad things happening. I got out of lock up and did my last year then went home May 6, 2024. I was arrested in August 2024. It really is something incredible how many times in my life I have found myself in a situation that I couldn't understand what was happening to me. Never very serious things. Just minor things that weren't taken seriously were blown out of proportion. Well, I got out in the beginning of April 2025 with two years dependent probation, but nowhere to stay or go, scared to go stay at a homeless shelter. And I basically had been gone six years, so I didn't know anyone. It didn't take long, seven days, to be exact, and I was back in jail. I was not going to give up and I am not OK with spending the rest of my life in and out of jail. I have never owned my own vehicle or had a driver's license. I'm 32 years old and I don't have much to show for it, but I know that there is something more out there for me. I got down on my knees and I apologized. I didn't know how to begin. It felt hard to believe that He could forgive me for all my stubbornness, but with all my heart and strength, that I could muster, I repented and asked Him to forgive me of my sins. I told Him that I'm done running from Him and the truth He has showed me. It's been roughly 2 months since I found my way back to God and in that time, I can't begin to tell you how much He has shown me and done for me and used me to help others. He has done a miracle bringing me back to life because I was barely holding on. I was starting to feel very hopeless and empty. He has changed that so much! He used me to help others all the time, every day, in the most unexpected ways. People really seem to listen to me and the way I talk about the gospel. I know God has plans for me, I just don't know what yet. Even though I don't know

where I'll stay or go when I get out, or what I'm facing, I'm not worried or afraid. God will always come first to me now. I'm just grateful He didn't let me fall to my own bad decisions letting their apparent success take me down a road that was so far from Him that I couldn't get back!

R.M.

Be Still My Soul

Kathrina von Schlegel

1. Be still, my soul! the Lord is on your side;
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
Leave to your God to order and provide;
In ev'ry change he faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul! your best, your heav'nly friend
Thru' thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

4. Be still, my soul! the hour is hast'ning on
When we shall be forever with the Lord,
When disappointment, grief, and fear are gone,
Sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.
Be still my soul! when change and tears are past,
All safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

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