

I Used to Be Lost

*I used to worry and struggle within,
Not satisfied with sin after sin
Lost in the world, chasing desires of flesh,
Not giving much thought to life after death.
I used to wonder what could stop the pain,
Or what made the sun shine after the rain.
Satan was lurking, people around me were hurting,
I never understood why my choices weren't working.
I used to think I was better off alone.
God brought me to jail to make Himself known.
He opened my eyes, and answered all my questions.
It's by His grace I am learning His lessons.
Only His blood caused my debt to be covered,
All I want now is to share this with you and others.
Oh what Joy! I used to be lost,
Now I know Jesus paid the cost.*

Thank you Jesus

Matthew 5:9

May God increase the "Piecemakers Ministry"

Te amo en Cristo Marie

Robert J. Welsh

11/15/09

Well hello back at cha-Marie...

Thank you so much for the pictures, materials and "Words of Life" book; eight.

I enjoyed your testimony of how your search for faith and the outcome of your soul being fed-Wow!

Thank you Jesus

"Robert's Testimony"

Start at the time I was my Mother's heartburn (Or birth) November 25, 1946. I was raised in a very dysfunctional home. The only love I ever known until I accepted Jesus was a mother's love. I was not raised in anything close to a religious home. The only time God was mentioned is when his name was used in cursing. My Mom and Dad were divorced when I was two-Why, I don't know to this day. The only things I know about my mom is she loved to roller-skate-she was going to be a trapeze flyer until an accident happened and she danced on stage. I know nothing of my Dad's family. When I tried to find out, I was always put off with anger, so I stopped trying. The man my mother married shortly after her divorce was very physical and verbally abusive to her until the day she died in 2001. I was the only child and not accepted by him ever; He passed away the beginning of this year, 2009. I now thank God I was the only child, but I wish I could have told him I found Jesus and forgiveness for past hatred and evil thoughts I hold for him. Anyway Marie, I tried being the model son for my mother's sake-If I did wrong my stepfather made her pay. He would use any excuse to drink and abuse her in front of me. I was and honor roll student from Junior High to 11th grade of high school. Marie I didn't know it then as I do now but God had His hands on me: There was no real love in my family Marie: to this day only anger, jealousy and I will even say hate. At the age of 17 I had enough of my stepfather and his abuse to my mom. She would not leave him for good, only a few weeks or months at a time during my growing up so I got her to sign papers for me to enter the Coast Guard. I told her to sign the papers or I'm leaving home. If I don't I will hurt my stepfather bad-she eventually signed.

Now I took my first step into the real world. "Boot Camp." Wow! I learned how to be a man-swear, smoke, yes, I did some drinking. (I did not

like drinking, too many bad memories.) After boot camp I went to Alaska. This is where I first experienced God. I knew Jesus and believed Him to be the Son of God but the trinity was fuzzy to me. (I didn't understand.)

Anyway, while we were out at sea I came down with double "new-moan-ya, we were in a bad storm, ruff seas, not close to anywhere with a hospital-helicopters could not medovac me. The ships doctor was very concerned but nothing could be humanly done. Our ships radar man and one of the enginemen were elders of the church (L.D.S.), they visited me in sickbay and asked me if I believe in Jesus Christ and I said yes. They laid hands on me and prayed. The next day my fever of 104.3 broke, two days later I was I was cleared to return to work. I did not understand everything that took place then as I do now. I look back on my life before and truly accepted Christ and this is what I seen. I felt like mistletoe, which is a growth that feeds off another life source. So as a youngster, a boy, a teen, and as a single man I lived in the shadows of other families where I found love and harmony, wish I really belonged. I was invited to the Raydormans home for dinner. His little child of seven asked me if I would come to church and Sunday school with her. She needed visitors to win a child's picture Bible for the most visitors invited.

Well, her dad said, I believe your teacher meant other children trying to get me off the hook, but that didn't work-Jamie brought her Dad the rules of the contest-story made short, Jamie earned a beautiful picture Bible, not for the most but for the oldest. Ever try to sit in a kindergarten chair as a 21 year old? Wow! Quite an experience. Yes Marie, I became part of the family: I was baptized as and L.D.S. Just to jump ahead, the church (or stake) as they call a church was small and loving, family knit.

Well, as time moved on I felt I knew I wanted a family of my own: I felt I knew what a husband and father should be. I just would be the opposite of what I had experienced growing up. Well, the religion thing was great until the family I clung to went their own way and I realized I wasn't really family. I have to be honest, I believe now I was into family-than into belonging to Christ (not realizing they are one in the same) Galatians 4:1-7, Romans 8:15-17, Ephesians 3:1-6, James 2:5. Marie, in all these verses, and more throughout the scriptures, old and new testament, I have learned I have a loving family in Jesus Christ, but not until 7/20/05. After all my searching for a loving, compassionate, helpful, sincere family to belong to-I was there all the time- "I was blind but now I see." Wow!

"I" tried to make my first marriage work. We were not equally yoked-17 years later-2 boys-ended in divorce. I raised the two boys on "my" own. I lived in sin with a lady for 10 years. We cared for each other but I was

unable to produce any more children. This became a problem-we parted good friends.

Never thinking to turn back to God with my desires and problems, I continued on with my selfish, lustful, self-centered life, not thinking how this was affecting my two children. The two boys were 15 months apart in age. The oldest turned to drugs-which I never did drugs, I did not know how to handle the problem-I handled it poorly-I almost lost Robert Jr. He had a motor scooter accident under the influence of alcohol and drugs.

God sure had His hands on my family. Did I acknowledge that? No I didn't. Did Robert learn? No, he didn't. He continued until he went to jail for a month. (That scared him straight) Did I go and visit him? No, I did not. My attitude was "I" tried to help, you ignored me (If I would only apply that to my own life. Now that I look back I did the same with my Father in heaven, I ignored all the signs.)

I tried to teach my boys that school is very important, to respect women-they are not to be abused, and to respect the law. To do the very best at whatever task they undertake.

Robert, from what I here has married a Christian lady and he is following the Lord (an answer to my recent prayers.) Thank you Jesus.

My son Timothy (Correct spelling-my fault, I wanted to be different.) I had no real problems with Tim: he was ahead of the curriculum in school. Tim was the runt until he turned 13-in 10th grade he was 6'5" tall. In school he was always defending himself against gang members in his age group using him as a target for kids wanting to belong to the Hispanic group. Tim had no wish to fight; he knew he could hurt someone.

Time dropped out of school. The school would not try to help his situation. At the age of 19 Time married his high school sweetheart. She was two years younger than him. Her parents wouldn't listen to me that they were too young. Tim worked for her dad. They moved to Ukiah, CA 2 years later. The second two years they had my first granddaughter: a year later the second, two years after that the third granddaughter. My job at those times would allow me the time off. I didn't see my grandchildren until the oldest was 4 years old.

I have very little report with the grandchildren (sounds like an old family pattern). This includes Time is divorced now with joint custody and joint problems. _Please keep them in prayer.

Well, I remarried-adopted 5 of my stepchildren's children so they wouldn't go to foster homes.

Did I want to? Yes. I was a different Dad than with my own. I was involved. This was 3 girls, 2 boys ages 4, 3 1/2, 2 1/2, 1 1/2, an infant 5 days

old. Thirteen years later-wife more into her dogs, children second, older kids (her natural children) into the drugs and whatever scene that lost her children in the first place came third. Then me, then the house, end of scenario. I fell and fell hard Marie-Wound up in jail. (No one to come and visit this beat puppy.)

My older son was in my mind and my attitude toward him. Wow! I was in the corner-58 years old-scared. No one was answering my phone calls: I can remember myself sliding down the wall, saying O God, O God, in a whispering voice. This is when Clyde Jackson came and comforted me and asked me if I knew Jesus. I told Clyde I knew Jesus but not about Him.

I don't remember if I told you about the words that formed in my mind after telling Clyde I knew of Jesus but not about Him. (The words that really scared me were, "Robert, you will listen to me now or burn.") Marie if my son was scared straight-would you call me spiritually scared straight? I can see how the Lord has guided my life even when I turned the wrong way-since my truthfully accepting Him July 20, 2005 He has placed a hedge of protection around me. He has never left me nor has He forsaken me. Deuteronomy 31:6, 8-Hebrews 13:5,6.

God has created me for His purpose. Ephesians 1:4-11 tells me so. I do everything mortally possible to keep my ear tuned to hear His word and His will for my life.

Well, Marie I guess I have gotten pretty carried away, sorry. I have never written my story or testimony, only spoken it and this is about $\frac{3}{4}$ of what God has done for me. I would like to tell you, "How I know for a fact that God is REAL-what He has done in my life since I have been in prison.

I have a picture I would like you to have. I am an amateur copy artist what I see and like to try to draw. I also like poems and sayings so sometime I draw pictures along with poems or sayings as I did this one. The authors of the original I could not find. The rough drawing is a copy of an original I saw: the saying I just found after I wrote my story. It's a short version of what I wanted to say. I want to get this in the mail so please excuse my sloppiness, my grammar, my long windedness, poor spelling and punctuation.

Thank you for the writing materials and introduction to the "Piecemakers Country Store."

May God keep increasing your ministry.

Te amo en Cristo,
Robert J. Welsh