

## Testimony Time

Written by David Allen

Tuesday, 30 June 2009 15:24 - Last Updated Tuesday, 30 June 2009 16:37

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In 1976, life seemed great: I had a good paying job, a wife and two children, a house, a new car, and money in the bank, and I was in my last year of college on my way to earning an Associates' degree.

Then, in December of that year, it all fell apart. I was drinking too much, and my wife was seeing another man.

A Catholic at the time, I went to the midnight mass on Christmas Eve. I waited in the pew after the service to talk to a priest, for what seemed like forever. I don't remember very much of the conversation because of my condition, but I do recall him saying to go home, and that everything would be all right in the morning. I replied that my problem was at home.

Things deteriorated rapidly over the next few months. Even though I was working and going to school full time to help better myself and my family, it was all disappearing. I turned to "getting high" so I wouldn't have to face reality. I don't even remember my last semester of college, but I graduated with honors anyway in May of '77. I remember walking across campus and seeing one of my professors who thought I would have been on cloud nine. My answer to her was something to the affect that I felt sad, alone, and lost.

Life worsened over the next few months. I considered suicide. The only question in my mind then was "how?" How can I do this and not make it look like a suicide? The answer was to have an accident in my pickup truck, and I knew the best place for it: a huge oak tree on this one curve in the city. As I approached that tree, I had my hand on the wheel of the truck, ready to turn into the tree when a voice spoke to me. "Knowing your dumb luck, you'll be crippled instead of being killed!" In that instant I could see myself in a cast from head to toe, not being able to move, and knowing I would be spending the rest of my life just like that. Well, that's not what I wanted. I wanted to end it all, not wind up like that!

I hung on for a few more weeks. Then I made the most important phone call of my life. A friend of mine suggested I call this other acquaintance that could get me a more economical car to drive. (Child support was killing me too). As it turned out, Bob was a Christian. Of course, I didn't know what that meant, but I let him talk. He invited me to come to church with him. I told him, "Why not, it can't hurt." Nothing could hurt me at that point in my life.

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I went to a service in a home with Bob that Sunday. The group was called "The Kingdom of God" (later renamed "The People of Truth"). Strange name, but so what, they can't hurt me. I don't remember what was preached, and I don't recall ever feeling so much love at any time in my life. I could not explain it, I just felt it. That feeling grew within me over the next several weeks. Bob moved on. I felt like an abandoned baby, but I felt loved!

I continued to worship with these saints, and there was something there that I had never experienced before. One Sunday, someone asked me how long I was saved. I couldn't answer him because I didn't know what it meant yet. No one ever pressured me to do anything. I was accepted as I was, and allowed to worship together with them, no strings attached. I would come to learn what it meant: all I had to do was to ask God for forgiveness of my sins and believe that Jesus was the Son of God. If I did that, God would forgive me and lift the burden of sin off of me.

One evening at my parents' home where I had been staying, I did just that. Nothing seemed to happen right away, although I did feel better about myself. Sunday morning, sometime during the sermon, I realized that something was missing. I couldn't put my finger on it immediately, but something was definitely missing. Then it hit me: the burden was missing! The weight of sin that I had been carrying was lifted. I had felt like Atlas holding the world on his shoulders, but God had lifted that world off of my shoulders. I was saved! Born again! I was made a new creature in Christ Jesus! He was now my Lord and Savior, and I knew it for a fact!

My problems did not disappear that day. My wife still divorced me, but the burden of it all was easier as I had help carrying it. I saw the hand of God on many occasions since that day, working things out in ways I could not have dreamed were possible. I was not made perfect that day, but I was given the means to head in that direction.

I have had ups and downs in my life, but through it all, God has always been there. All I had to do was repent and God was there to lift me up. He is a kind and loving father! I don't feel that I can ever give God enough praise for what He has done in my life, but I am going to try!

God gave me life twice. The first time was when I was born of my mother and breathed the breath of life. The second time was when I was born of God and He breathed into me His spirit and, as it is written in 1 Peter 1:23, I became born again "not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

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God has given many this wonderful gift and a second chance to do it right. Because of this “we also should walk in newness of life.” Praise His name!!