

- Testimony -

Russ

The only memories I have of seeing my parents as a child, were visiting them in prison.

I was raised, like most kids with "runamuck" parents, by grandma. She was a good lady, but had six of her own kids to raise and worry about. I learned at an early age if I didn't make any noise that everyone would just kind of forget I was there and I could do whatever I wanted. So as a kid, that's what I did...stayed quiet and did what I wanted.

My father was released from prison when I was 9 years old. I had hopes of being a family, maybe even one like all the other kids had. Then 42 hours after he got released, he was killed in a club war. His brother, my Uncle David, who had been like a dad to me the last 9 years was killed 48 days later.

I got a real grown-up attitude about that time, and after a lot of traveling between family, I split to live with the club. Nobody said much, and a few token words spoken to grandma and mom from my Aunt Pam put a stop to any protest.

At an early age, I was using and selling drugs of all kinds. About the same time I took to carrying a gun. I found, that in order to support my life style, I had to take what I wanted. I did this for about 12-14 years. Then, I received 3 years in prison for armed robbery, 5 years for a serious felony prior, 1 year for a weapon, 3 years on a G.T.A. and 4 years on a 459 with weapon. A total of 16 years, but with consecutive sentencing and good time, I would be out in under 6 years. I was in prison, filled with hate, rage and pain. I did not like the man I was. I did not know what to do about it. I was a drug addict and I hated everything.

Then on November 15, 1992, I bowed my knees to Jesus. I asked Him to change me, to allow me to become a "man of God" and a man of peace. I asked Him to give me a purpose and to give me wisdom. That was three years ago. Since then, on more than one occasion, I decided I did not have what it took to live as a Christian, and I'm sorry to say, attempted to turn away. But glory to God for His strength is sufficient, even to hold on to someone like me.

He has taken away the hatred and anger that once filled my heart and replaced it with pure love. He has made me face my pain and in so doing He has healed it.

He has given me a deep desire to emulate Him and though I fall terrible short, He continues to shed His mercy on me and uphold me by His grace.

He has instilled in me a thirst for His word and all knowledge and my understanding continues to grow daily. He has worked miracle after miracle in my life. Real, true, honest miracles. I view the world in a different way. I used to see everything 3-dimensionally. Now I view everything in the "Jesus Dimension". (The book to be published soon-amen!)

In short, He heard my prayer and has honored it. When I did not have the strength, courage or self-control to continue in His ways. Well, He just loved me a little more.

Jesus is alive for He lives in my heart. He is "the way", the only way, for I tried all the others.

All glory, honor and praise be His today & eternally.

Your humble and thankful servant of the gospel of Jesus.

R.A. "Russ"  
Saint - Saved, sanctified and soon to be glorified.