

He Brought Me Through

**Personal Testimony
Of Teresa Purdy**

Saved March 12, 1995

My name is Teresa Purdy. I was born in Memphis, TN and spent most of my life going to church every Sunday. As I reached the age of seven, I began to feel a tug at my heart. So, I went down the aisle and talked to the preacher. I really don't remember what was said. I remember the preacher came to my house and talked to me, and then I was baptized and became a member of the church. I

don't remember any change in my life, but I was only seven, how much sin could there be?

As I grew my life was pretty normal. We went to church almost every Sunday. Everything was going just fine. I don't really remember a lot about spiritual things during my childhood. I do remember when I was fifteen. There was a revival going on. I can't remember the name of the preacher, but I remember something he said. He said, "Repentance is a turning away from sin." Well, I thought about it, and I realized that I had never turned away from anything. There was something wrong inside of me! I must not be saved. Every time someone talked about salvation, something inside of me was stirred. So, by the end of the revival, I was sure something was very wrong inside of me. I went to the altar, and someone prayed with me. I was presented to the church, baptized and now officially 'saved.'

In the meantime, I had met Brian, who is now my husband. We began to see a lot of each other. I was head over heels in love. As in the normal practice of 'people in love' these days, things went too far. When I was barely eighteen, we eloped. We just couldn't bear to tell my parents that I was pregnant. We were off on a new life together. Church? Oh, were you supposed to go every week?

Once or twice a month was plenty for me. After all, it's so hard to get up and get ready especially after the baby was born. We went as much as we could, so we thought.

Thirteen months after Amanda was born, Christal was born. By this time, we had moved to Watertown, N.Y., where Brian's Dad lived. We joined the church there, and were faithful members, but something was still missing in my life. "I'll just get more involved in the church - Maybe go out to witness to people. That's it, I'm not sharing what God has done," I thought.

Things didn't work out there, so we moved back to Memphis, TN. Our marriage was on the rocks. Nothing was right in our lives, so we separated. We got back together after a couple of months and decided to get back in church. Then I decided we just needed more money. So, I went to work. You know what happened then. It got to be such a hassle to get up on my only off day. Out with church.

Then we moved to Braden, where we now live. Now, maybe we will be happy. We decided to have another child. Maybe that would help. By the time Johnathan was five we were having trouble again. I was miserable and I made everyone around me miserable. Surely God didn't intend for me to live like this. I had decided the way of the world was the way to go. Who needed marriage and commitment? I was tired of being tied down! I wanted my freedom. After all my friends seemed happy. Why should I suffer? Well, I was approaching thirty. I must be having a "mid-life crisis" as the world would say. Brian tried everything to make me happy. He knew I loved Reba McEntire, and she was coming to Memphis on the day before my thirtieth birthday. So, he got the best tickets he

could get, and he took me to see my idol. As she entered the stage, I stood to my feet and began to applaud. While I was standing, I heard a voice say, "You never worshiped me like that." I just stood there pondering ... "God? I never have really worshiped God." The security guard asked me to sit down as the concert went on as if nothing had happened.

The next morning, I went to work as usual and told everyone about the concert. But I just couldn't tell anyone about the voice I had heard. They'd think I was crazy! Now I was really miserable. I couldn't enjoy my worldly life and I didn't want to surrender and go back to church. I mean, just look at all I'd have to give up.

Before long we were separated again. I was going to get a divorce! I couldn't live with this man any longer. Everything was wrong. Something had to change!!! Then, just about two weeks before the divorce was final, the children came home from their visit with Dad. They had been to church. "It's a great church, Mom," they told me. What did he think he was doing? Church! Now! The children loved it. They wanted to go back. So... The next Sunday, I took them to this church. We walked in, sat down and waited for church to begin. The next thing I know, Brian sits down next to us. After church we all went home together.

We decided to start over, again. We went to church every time the doors were open. Things began to get better. I remembered what God had told me..." You never worshiped me like that." I thought to worship was to work. So, I went about to "establish my own righteousness." (Romans 10:3)

Though I had no idea how, I knew I had to worship God. So, I began to “clean up” my life. I stopped drinking and running around. I tried to stop smoking. I gave up country music. I stopped listening to anything that wasn’t ‘Christian music.’

In October of 1992, I decided to quit working. I wanted to be more dedicated to my children, my husband, and my church. One night very shortly after I had quit work, I began to look at my life and I became angry. No matter how hard I tried, nothing satisfied me. I thought of ending it all. I ran to my room, closed the door, fell on my face and began to cry out to God. “Lord, something is wrong with me!!! If I am lost, please save me!!! God, please help me.” God helped me that night. He didn’t save me, but He surely helped me. Over the next three years I lost the desire for those things I had been trying to stop on my own. (John 16:7-12)

That following summer I went on a youth trip with the church youth group, as a counselor. God really began to move on me. I started to see how wicked I really was. So, I ‘rededicated.’ I told my daughters I was sorry, and I wanted to be a better mom. I begged God to help me be what He wanted me to be. When we came home, the whole youth group had been touched. We all got some things ‘right’ as they say in the Christian world today. Soon those commitments began to fade. ‘I’ made the commitments. Jesus did not commit himself to me, because He knew my heart. (John 2:23-25)

A month or so later, our pastor resigned. He said that it was God’s will and I trusted him to know God’s will. So, the church was without a pastor.

In September of 1993, Bro. Greg Moffitt came to fill in. I had never seen anyone so full of God in my life! As we searched for a pastor, we heard many preachers. Finally, after nineteen months, we called Bro. Greg to be our Pastor.

Bro. Greg began to preach about Godly sorrow, repentance and salvation. I had never heard those terms the way he preached. (Mark 4:23-25) He said, "God saves a man! It's not just a decision, it's regeneration." (Titus 3:5)

My works of righteousness were no good. (Isaiah 64:6) I asked Bro. Greg, "How can a man know if he is lost?" He said, "When God comes, you know it is Him. If God didn't save a man, then he is not saved." (I Thessalonians 1:5) I knew right then that I was lost! Both of the times that I could remember, I had made decisions. I decided to turn myself around and called it repentance. I thought I had to do it. Everything in my life was my work!! (Galatians 2:16, Ephesians 2:8-9)

The more I heard the more I searched. I found that I did not have true salvation. (John 5:38-47) I realized that all the sin in my life had not been just sin against my parents, or Brian, or even against my children. It was sin against God! (Jeremiah 16:10-12) I always wanted the forgiveness of men, but I never sought the forgiveness of God. I had broken the first and foremost commandment. I had other gods in my life. My biggest god was myself.

Wednesday night, March 8, 1995, Bro. Greg preached, "The kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force." (Matthew 11:12-15) Violent meaning vehement desire. I ran to the altar. I had a great desire. I could see my sin. I could see how wicked I was, but I couldn't believe God would save me. I saw God walk away from me that night. I just couldn't believe. Janet Moffitt showed me a passage of scripture that night about how a man prayed for God to help his unbelief.

(Mark 9:23-24) So I went home and prayed for God to help my unbelief. On Sunday, March 12, 1995, Bro. Greg preached about the woman with the issue of blood. (Mark 5:25-34) He said that she had to believe that Jesus would heal her, or she wouldn't have pressed through the crowd to get to Him. I wondered if I could get to Jesus.

After Bro. Greg preached, Janet and Kathy Charlton, the pianist, sang a song. I can't remember what they were singing but I can remember what God did for me!!

As I stood there crying, Johnathan, my son, was patting me on the back. I remember that I didn't want the comfort of man anymore. I knew I had to get to God! I began to pray in my heart to God, "I don't need him to comfort me God, all I need is you." At that point it was as if his hand was snatched away from my back. Then I felt the loving arms of the Almighty God wrap around me as He said to me... "I'm taking you through." All my heart could say was, "Thank you Lord, Thank you Lord! It seemed like the brightest light coupled with the sweetest voice I had ever heard! When the God of Heaven spoke to me...He brought me through!