

Miracles that follow the plow :: Prayer Request with Testimony and Warnings.

Prayer Request with Testimony and Warnings. - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/4/28 19:16

Even before I begin, I want to preface this with a massive apology. Please, please forgive me because this will no doubt be a very lengthy post. I know people hate long posts so if you don't read it, I understand! If you do read it, surely there must be a great blessing stored up for you in Heaven! This will be the most difficult thing I've done in decades because I'm a very, very private person who has faded into invisibility in this world. I don't talk about myself. Other than this site, the only other site I signed-up for is YouTube (with 100% fake information for privacy) just so I could collect sermons into playlists.

But, I am fighting the biggest battle of my life and I'm desperate for prayer. Yet, I know it's so inconsequential in light of the troubles most people are going through. If I were to compare my hardship to anyone else's, I would be so ashamed and too embarrassed to speak up. But I'm that desperate for prayer.

I was the quiet goody-two-shoes kid no one liked and picked on. I became a Christian when I was 17 when a 19 year old girl drove me around for four hours in a very tiny town and told me about Jesus. I remember feeling like if there was snow outside, it would have melted for miles around me because I felt so different. I was then baptized because it was an outward showing of my inward faith. Sadly, American Cultural Christianity set in because I was never disciplined. Christianity was just something that happened and then it was done. You just tried to be a good person and check-off the daily boxes of giving, reading the Bible, praying, not swearing, etc.,

I turned 50 years old this month. I have no family whatsoever and was an embarrassment to them anyway. I grew up very rural and VERY naive in a house of strangers called a "family." I was scared of my dad who worked on the road most of the time and, when he came home, was belittling and abusive emotionally and physically. All my mom did was yell. I never heard the words "I love you" or was hugged by my parents. I was made to feel worthless and always had to prove myself. To this day I always feel like I have to prove myself worthy of being employed, liked, a friend, etc.,. Actually, I received my first hug when I was 18. It was from a total stranger.

When I left home, I had ZERO knowledge of the world. I wish I could adequately describe it because it isn't the truth. By God's grace alone, I fumbled my way through two decades with no plans, not even knowing I was supposed to have one. People always thought I was an oddball in the world. I never wanted other people to feel the way I did so I was always a good boy. All my life, even today, people tell me that they've never met anyone like me.

In my 20s, I moved to a big city, made a friend who took me to his church, and I became part of his group there. I attended regularly for the first time. Unfortunately, it was a Word of Faith, money-come-to-me type church. (I never cared two hoots about money. I was there for the friends.) I tried getting involved but the leadership of the church was a popularity clique and was brutally critical of anyone not in their immediate circle of power. But, the group of friends I had were close and I loved them. Eventually, that church fell into such drama it should have been renamed The Days of Our Lives Church of The Young and the Restless. As a result, everyone in my group of friends eventually left the church and then I did, too. But not before I was beaten to a pulp by the leadership. Losing my friends and being deeply hurt by the church, I never attended another one regularly. I tried other churches, but felt 100% ignored. I wanted to talk about the service but no one else ever did. Everyone was always in a hurry to go out to eat, watch the game, or had plans. I met people with Sunday faces and Sunday Christianity. I had questions and wanted to talk about Jesus but that just made me the weird, religious one that no one wanted to talk to.

Having no self-worth at all, I was one big walking scar of hurt and confusion. I was a good boy, so why does everyone keep rejecting me? Finally, I became a recluse. No friends. No church. No social life. Just existing. Work and home. For two decades.

In 2002, when I was 36, I came across a sermon on YouTube that was an hour long! A whole hour! At that time, videos were only 10 minutes long so to commit to watching an hour long video was pretty big! It was the infamous "Shocking" video by Paul Washer. After watching that video, I was literally shaking and scared to death! I felt like I got hit by a bus. Something in me told me he was telling the truth and I started watching every Paul Washer sermon I could find. I started waking up to what true Christianity was and, even though I was scared, I wanted more. That's when I found SermonIndex. It had JUST started. I devoured sermons by the hundreds for at least a year. I spent more time on SermonIndex than

han I did doing anything else, including working or sleeping.

I was thrilled! I had joy! I learned that I'm not a weirdo for loving Jesus and wanting to talk about Him! I wasn't a freak because I wanted to talk about sermons and scriptures! But, I was still hurt and deeply scarred. I wasn't going to risk getting hurt again by going to church even though every fiber of my being was crying out for fellowship! So, I stayed a recluse. Slowly the joy faded because I was alone with no one to talk to about Jesus. Ever since then, I tried filling that chasm of pain and loneliness with head knowledge from watching literally thousands of sermons. The Holy Spirit was trying to get my attention but I was too dumb to recognize it.

I still had head knowledge "Christianity" and joy wasn't lasting.

One day, in 2013, I was taking the bus to work and something in me "snapped." I couldn't take it anymore. I couldn't continue to live like this. I was tired of being counted on to do everything for everyone else and getting nothing in return. I was a lake with so many rivers and streams running out of it but had none flowing back in to replenish me. I finally had nothing left to give and felt dried up. When I got to work, I quit my job at the beginning of winter! I was living paycheck to paycheck and only had enough money to pay two months' rent and bills. That's it. Knowing this, I still preferred risking homelessness in a place where winters are harsh and I would have nowhere to go. But I didn't care because I was at the end of my rope.

For eight-and-a-half months, I live on miracles. I never once asked a soul for money. I was denied ANY help from the state. My phone stopped ringing completely. It was just me and God. Even though all I had was head knowledge about Christianity, I prayed in belief because I knew God kept His word. Through His sheer mercy, God came through every month with exactly the money I needed to pay my bills. This is where my being naive came in handy because I never once questioned that God would take care of me. In fact, during that eight-and-a-half months, I only left the front door of my apartment three times and that was to go across the street to a corner market for a couple of grocery items. Otherwise, I lived on whatever food I had in my apartment. By the end, I was down to eating half a cup of expired oatmeal or rice every two to three days. One day I realized that my phone didn't ring for months and I that I hadn't spoken a word for four months. Everyone who called themselves my friend abandoned me within a week because they were afraid I was going to ask them for money. They were uncomfortable with my being unemployed.

I didn't have the strength or the desire to even try to help myself. I wasn't ready to find another job. I did nothing but watch YouTube sermons. It was during this time that I started growing up and losing some of my naivety. I realized that I had wasted my life, wandering through it without any thought. (I realized it was because I never thought I deserved anything so I just took each day as it happened.) I realized what Christianity really was, mostly by watching SermonIndex videos. But I also realized that my view of God was rooted in how I saw my earthly father. I was utterly afraid of being around him because he was always mad at me and looking for a reason to beat me. I didn't WANT a personal relationship with God. Why would I? Surely He wanted nothing to do with me by now either and I couldn't bear going to Him just to be rejected by Him, too! So, I stayed stubborn and comforted myself with head knowledge and more sermons.

Even though God was merciful and showed the most amazing grace to take care of me during those eight-and-a-half months when I was a shut in, I started wondering if I was really a Christian after all. I truly believed on Christ and I understood what my baptism meant. But, there was no personal relationship with Jesus. Watching sermon videos had replaced prayer and reading the Word for myself. But no one would ever suspect that of me.

Today, I find myself with two friends - a 90 year old Catholic woman who lives across the hall from me and a 33 year old non-Christian that I work with shampooing carpets occasionally. I've heard for years that there's no such thing as a Lone Ranger Christian and HEED MY WARNING that it's true! This is NOT the will of God for His children!

Here is why I want prayer and where I stand now:

1. I don't know if I'm really a Christian and that scares me to death. I can honestly say that all I want in the world is to live out the rest of my time here to His glory, regardless of the cost. I want to know Him and walk with Him as close as any human being can possibly do this. I have no ambitions or desires for myself other than this. I strongly feel a battle raging within me between this desire and actually sitting down to open the Bible. I'm tormented in my mind: "What good will it do? I'm the biggest joke and failure. Literally NOBODY loves me, not even God. He's got to be so mad at me that He's sure to punish me if I dare speak to Him! I couldn't bear that right now. I've failed Him and wasted my life and now time is so short it's too late."

2. I want to feel loved. For just once in my life, I want to be loved. I've never heard those words spoken to me. I want to

o belong somewhere. I would give what little I own, or ever will own, to have just one Christian friend and a church body to belong to and be a part of. I don't care about fame or money. Recognition that I exist would be enough. To belong somewhere where I can serve behind the scenes to help others and build them up is enough.

3. Most of all, I want to feel loved by God and be assured of my salvation. I feel guilty even wanting this because I don't want to live by my emotions and needing to "feel" things to know them. But I know I have very deep scars that need to be healed. Writing this post is the scariest, most painful thing I've ever done! I'm still not sure if I'll click "submit" or not. I need to renew my mind but the battle within is raging. The guilt, shame and condemnation is unbearable but I WILL NOT live this way anymore. If I can't know Jesus so intimately that I can hear Him whisper in the midst of a storm, I would rather just die and be done with this world. (I assure everyone that I am NOT suicidal! Please know that!)

I have the head knowledge of what the word says. I "know" God loves me. I "know" He's not mad at me. I "know" Jesus took all of my sins and shame on the cross. I "know" condemnation is not from God. I have ALL of this and much more in my head but it hasn't reached my heart! I DO believe everything in the scriptures but I'm in unbelief because I've NEVER known anything but the opposite of these things in my life, so I don't know how to RECEIVE them. No one has EVER told me they love me and I've had to prove myself to everyone my entire life. So I struggle with believing His promises and goodness are for me because I've been a complete failure at proving I'm worth anything! Most of all, I'm petrified that I'll hear Matthew 7:21-23 spoken to me!

If I could only have one thing, even if it meant I never left my apartment again, it would be to truly know and love Jesus for who He is and to walk intimately with Him! I want to fulfill whatever it is that He's called me to do on this earth. I don't want to stand before a heap of ashes from burnt wood, hay and stubble. I don't want to be in heaven by the skin of my teeth! I want to be fully surrendered, fully consecrated to Him. I want to be so close to Him that He wants to bring me home like He did with Enoch! I don't want to be wicked and ask for a sign that He loves me so I can "feel" it. But the enemy has my brain so messed up that I even question my own motives. I FEEL the battle raging whenever I try to reach for my Bible!

I mourn for the wasted decades! I'm ashamed! But, if it's possible, I want the rest of the time I have on this earth to be so ON FIRE and BOLD for Him that Satan himself hates my name! The way I see it, I have NOTHING else to lose! What is my life anyway? Why am I so wicked to think that God can't love me after wasting my entire life? Why can't I receive His love?

I just have so many questions! Am I saved? Do I need to be baptized again? I don't want to be trapped or deceived into stagnation anymore! I've been rejected my whole life. It never bothered me coming from the world, but when it came from other believers and churches, I couldn't bear it anymore and I withdrew entirely. Now nobody knows I exist so I wonder if God's fed up with me, too, feeling like I've abused His grace, mercy and forgiveness too many times that He wants nothing to do with me! I'm so tired of being alone and scared and the pain is too much!

So please, please pray for me. I want to experience His love. I want to KNOW that I'm saved. I want to persevere through this battle going on inside me. I don't know how to be more honest or open about this. I don't care if everyone here knows how stubborn and wretched I've been my entire life. I just want to be free, to be clean, to KNOW Him and serve Him with everything I have!

It took every ounce of strength I could muster to write this, yet it flowed out of me like the Red Sea closing in on the Egyptian army. I'm so sorry this is way too long. I know people hate long posts. I've just never felt so desperate and forgotten. If nothing else, please learn from my example.

Re: Prayer Request with Testimony and Warnings. - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2016/4/28 19:31

Brother Keith, that is one of the most powerful testimonies I have ever personally read, sad thing is, I doubt you hold any patents on the life you have endured. Brother, I will not just keep you in my prayers, but I will pick out certain things that you are in need of answers for. I have never liked the words "I will keep you in my prayers" I like to pray for individual things a person is in need of, and point them out to the Lord. Brother Keith please jot this down in your heart, Jesus loves you, and so does Mr. Bill.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2016/4/28 19:45

Keith-

After reading this I have little doubt you are truly His and more loved than you can ever imagine.

I'll be praying brother. Thank you for sharing your heart.

Re: Prayer Request with Testimony and Warnings. - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2016/4/28 20:03

Brother Keith, your deep desire to know Him more will surely be fulfilled. You are loved.

In Christ,

Re: - posted by dolfan (), on: 2016/4/28 20:10

Keith

I love you man

Re: - posted by Fatherschild (), on: 2016/4/28 21:03

Brother thank you for your very powerful testimony. God has been refining your heart for him and His love for you endures forever. You are loved and you are undoubtedly His and saved for a very special purpose.

I know that mountain you are climbing concerning your earthly father. God brought me through many valleys and a whole lot of fire before my heart was able to forgive and be free of that oppressive burden of fear. But He did it, and through love and forgiveness, mercy and grace He filled my heart with love overflowing for that poor earthly father I had. After He delivered me from that place of fear I was no longer timid to go to Him, step by step (it was a process) Now He's my safe place to run to, my safe place to be each moment, my fierce protector and gentle, loving, kind and amazing Father. He will never leave you nor will He ever forsake you.

I too will pray for and stand with you believing you will receive all the best our Father (yours and mine - hey we're related :) has in store for you

Loving You Too

Re: Prayer Request with Testimony and Warnings., on: 2016/4/28 21:37

My dear brother Keith! I love you so much and am extremely glad to "meet" you!

The verse that came to my mind as I read your deeply heartfelt and precious post is Psalm 51:17.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise."

Brother, if everything you wrote about yourself is true, which I don't doubt for a minute, then I believe with all my heart that you are extremely near and dear to the heart of our Father, and fully His.

The fact that His grace abounded to you to the point of your being able to post your amazing testimony and prayer request is earth shatteringly huge to me. I dare say it smells like the fragrance of revival!

Wow, I cannot remember reading a post on here where someone was quite at the end of themselves as you sound (even though I don't doubt others have been).

Keith, as the reality of Father's 100% pure love continues to wash over you through cyberspace (by the Spirit), watch out! I am hopeful that you will be healed and "revived" to love others around you with such a fragrance of Christ that His Kingdom and more healing will spring forth from you like a calf leaping from the stalls! (Malachi 4 is on my mind).

His love is contagious! As His love fills your heart, like a sponge gets filled with water, my prayer is that you will be "squeezed out" over others that need His love as well!

Your honesty and transparency is exceedingly refreshing brother. Even though you may "feel" empty, you are not! God's love is totally at work in you! I not only hear it, but sense it in my spirit. I'm not lying when I say His love has washed over me today through your post and I know there is a lot more where that came from, by His power!

Wow, I did not expect to write this much, but I guess you pulled it out of me brother. I hope my rambling encourages you in some small way!

By the way, if you ever want to talk, my email address is caleb4life@gmail.com and I'll be happy to share my phone number with you too if you email me. I cannot promise when or how often I will be able to speak with you, but my spirit is very willing!

That said, I know Jesus Himself will provide you with all the fellowship you need as you continue to open up to others like you have here. Go for it brother! You are on the earth for such a time as this!

With sincere love for you in Christ,
Caleb

Re: - posted by JFW (), on: 2016/4/28 22:06

Keith,

Dear brother your act of faith (posting this) has yielded immediate fellowship, encouragement and brotherly love, not to mention the testimony of your life has stirred the hearts of many other saints reminding them of what humility looks like:)

So thank you for sharing your testimony and for seeking prayer, giving us the opportunity to praise God for what He has already accomplished in you.

Tho this may sound crazy, and it may be ha, I'd say you're in and have been in a special place with the Lord and hope He continues to ripen you in the shade;)

If you've never read this, I hope it blesses you as much as it did me-
Leonard Ravenhill mentioned it in a sermon and a saint posted it here on SI a few years back;

If God has called you to be really like Christ in all your spirit, He will draw you into a life of crucifixion and humility and put on you such demands of obedience, that He will not allow you to follow other Christians, and in many ways He will seem to let other good people do things which He will not let you do.

Others can brag on themselves, and their work, on their success, on their writings, but the Holy Spirit will not allow you to do any such thing, and if you begin it, He will lead you into some deep mortification that will make you despise yourself and all your good works.

The Lord will let others be honored and put forward, and keep you hid away in obscurity because He wants to produce some choice fragrant fruit for His glory, which can be produced only in the shade.

Others will be allowed to succeed in making money, but it is likely God will keep you poor because he wants you to have something far better than gold and that is a helpless dependence on Him; that He may have the privilege of supplying your needs day by day - out of an unseen treasury.

God will let others be great, but He will keep you small. He will let others do a great work for Him and get credit for it, but He will make you work and toil on without knowing how much you are doing; and then to make your work still more precious, He will let others get the credit for the work you have done, and this will make your reward ten times greater when He comes.

The Holy Spirit will put strict watch over you, with a jealous love, and will rebuke you for little words and feelings, or for wasting your time, which other Christians never seem distressed over.

So make up your mind that God is an infinite Sovereign, and has a right to do what He pleases with His own, and He will not explain to you a thousand things which may puzzle you in His dealing with you. He will wrap you up in a jealous love, and let other people say and do many things that you cannot do or say.

Settle it forever, that you are to deal directly with the Holy Spirit, and that He is to have the privilege of tying your tongue, or chaining your hand, or closing your eyes, in ways that others are not dealt with.

Now, when you are so possessed with the Living God that you are, in your secret heart, pleased and delighted over this particular personal, private, jealous guardianship and management of the Holy Spirit over your life, you will have found the vestibule of heaven.

Re: - posted by brothagary, on: 2016/4/28 23:40

Keith I love your testimony and also you

Sounds like God has put some pure powerful desires in you, and He has some amazing plans for you, don't lose heart, a bruised reed, will not be broken by God, He will heal you, your time is coming, when the enemy comes in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard, He will shield you, He will use your life as a way to mold a special piece out of you, a sanctified vessel, made from special clay, and fired in the oven, you will become a strong vessel, that will not break under the hardest stress,

God will use this vessel to perform special duties, that He can't perform with other pieces He has made. The presence of the Lord will be your portion in a greater measure than usual

Labour to believe, speak the truth, and His will be done on earth as in heaven ...

Your time is near

Re: - posted by TrueWitness, on: 2016/4/29 0:31

Dear brother,

Your testimony has moved my heart because I too suffered from being a lone ranger Christian for years. I did not reach out and engage people because I basically didn't like myself and figured others would reject me if they got to know me. I'm convinced that many guys like myself got into difficulty because of failure to develop a healthy identity during my teen years. My dad suffered from poor self image and I interpreted his lack of involvement in my life as rejection. I acted out by getting involved in drugs and alcohol. It was drop-dead easy to live that lifestyle with other lost individuals trying to fill the hole in their heart that only Christ can fill. Well, I sowed my wild oats and reaped a whirlwind.

It sounds like you know a lot of perhaps good Christian doctrine and instead of acting out in rebellious behavior, you have chosen what could best be described as dead, dry orthodoxy. Straight as a gun barrel and just as empty. You go through the motions of being a Christian but it is based on PBA, Performance Based Acceptance. When you keep the rules you feel that your relationship with God is good, and when you slack off or fail, it is bad.

Many people have a hard time believing that God can have UNCONDITIONAL love for them. They did not get unconditional love from parents and the image they have of God the Heavenly Father is patterned after what their dad was like. You need more than anything to believe in your heart that God is FOR YOU all the time, even after you fail. You will never experience intimacy or union with Christ unless you know God loves you always. Remember, your faith in God's love for you is not based on events or circumstances in your life. It is based on the naked Word of God. Romans 5:8 - But God demonstrates His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Change starts on the inside and works its way out to the outside. When you are rooted and grounded in the love of God your behavior will change for the better. Do not put the cart before the horse. Focusing on the outer cup (making your main focus on behavior) will not bring about transformation on the inside.

You need two things: 1) a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Without this you will burn out as a Christian. Instead of putting out feelers to see if people like or accept you (you will be disappointed with this approach) you need to get your love need met by Jesus Christ himself. I am not saying to become a hermit. Good Christian friends

Miracles that follow the plow :: Prayer Request with Testimony and Warnings.

will come after you not only have your love need met by Christ but you will have love in abundance to give to others. If you come across as too needy or pitiful or pathetic, people will keep their distance from you. They can't fill a black hole of neediness. Also, people can pick up your feeling of not liking yourself. If you don't like yourself, nobody else will either.

The other thing you need is to anchor your identity in Christ. Reject all thoughts of being pitiful, pathetic or unlovable. This is done by faith and takes time. Remember, you can't and won't get everyone to like you. That's fine. Don't take it personally or obsess over it.

These are things that have really helped me overcome social isolation and allow me to become transformed into the person God intends me to be. I am still in process. Life is a journey not a destination. If you fall down, don't take it too hard. God is FOR YOU all the time. You can start over again wherever you are.

Blessings

-Daniel

Re: Prayer Request with Testimony and Warnings., on: 2016/4/29 5:00

Keith

That was the most moving testimony I have ever read. I am so pleased at the supportive response you have received and proud of my fellow posters here for the warmth they have shown you.

Some of your story resonates with me especially your isolation since childhood. I was one of the Pinks Disease babies who nearly lost their lives with 50% mercury teething 'powders' being in hospital for a long period. God saved my life as 25 % died, and knowing what I know now, I had the genetic defects that made detoxing the mercury very difficult.

As well as damage to my immune and neurological system, I suffered the emotional damage that was not understood in those days, in taking a baby away from its mother, leaving it to cry all day in a hospital bed and even disuading the mothers from visiting.

My parents were not able to love or nurture a child that this, though did an adequate job with my younger siblings. Besides, Pinks babies cried non stop and wore their mothers out. Later I was said to be a hypochondriac as I was always being ill.

I never remember a cuddle or even a kind word like you. I also discovered late in my life that I have aspergers Syndrome which explained a lot my total lack of social skills and inability to have relationships.

My extended family heard that I was an attention seeker, despite being very shy and withdrawn, and they never bothered with me. School was a nightmare on the days I was not sick.

So when I found the Lord at 23, there was exactly that baggage you described and I fell into the trap of being performance oriented. It led to me reaching the point of rejecting my faith. He seemed to bless others but do nothing to assist me in life or supply the help and support I desperately needed so that I could not see how He cared for me at all.

He could have intervened so many times, like when an uncle who would be classed as a pedophile today, began to interfere with me or the time when I walked straight into a terrible marriage with a gambling addict and later, an alcoholic, not having any idea how to watch out for myself or that any attention did not mean that I had found the love I craved for. I ended up abandoned by all and very sick indeed as I contracted Lyme Disease on top of everything.

It took many years for the Lord to break through my shell and for me to know that He had provided everything on the Cross for me and that He was just waiting to give me a pure heart, that is healed from previous scars and damage.

Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will be satisfied but you bet that Satan will do all in his power to keep those ones from believing that God is good and that they are loved by Him unconditionally. But we must lay all on the altar and accept all things as being allowed by our Father. He will then be able to make them work for the good instead of our bad. We will be overcomers in the kingdom and be shown wonderful things too incredible for words.

Your bravery in opening up like this is commendable and I am joining in with the others to pray that the desires of your heart

heart will be granted and the pure heart will be yours.

There is no love on earth that can compete with it nor damage to our hearts that it cannot overcome. The hidden ones know now much that is for them alone.

Re: The Lord's Touch - posted by Fatherschild (), on: 2016/4/29 10:27

Just a little P.S. to my last post Keith. The Lord been laying you on my heart to pray. You said, and I believe it is truly your hearts desire for the Lord to have a place for you to serve:

“To belong somewhere where I can serve behind the scenes to help others and build them up is enough.”

Consider that done in part brother. Your testimony is a powerful help to others here. The Lord has used you to touch me and others through your courage and conviction to speak your heart. He is already using you to minister to and build up others in this place. I pray God has you pour out here a whole lot more. You are a blessing to the Body of Christ brother.

And as far as your trepidation about hearing Matt. 7:21-23 spoken to you. You tell that liar to get behind you in Jesus’ name. There be the difference between conviction and condemnation. One brings life and the other is a bald face lie. Hold the line brother and don’t let that lie get past the gate anymore. You’re loved!

Standing with you - praying and believing

Re: - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/4/29 14:09

You know that feeling you get in your gut when you leave a post that you think might be "too much" and you get really nervous about going back to check on how it was received? I had that. Then I realized that, in all fairness, no one could say anything more firmly, or critical, to me that I've not already said to myself even more harshly. So, I signed back in.

In short, I'm overwhelmed. Mostly, there were tears as I can honestly say that I felt waves of love wash over me. That sounds so Oprah but it's an accurate description. I could actually feel the healing begin within me. How I "know" this, I can't describe but I felt walls and hardness "melt." Like I said, I can't describe it but that's exactly what happened. Along with healing, some understanding has come, too.

Some of your posts made me physically gasp because the Holy Spirit was very, very clearly speaking to me through them. He used ALL of them, I assure you! But some of them were CLEAR and VIVID words for me as though He Himself were talking to me specifically addressing exact wounds and questions.

When I finished reading everyone's replies, the Holy Spirit brought Moses to my remembrance. It took God 40 years to prepare Moses to be used, from age 40 to 80. Then his ministry started. I don't know if I "have a ministry" or not, but I can at least accept that the 33 years of my Christianity have been a time of preparation and that God can redeem them, even in me.

I want to address each post individually, but allow me to say, in general, that I am so grateful to all of you! Your genuineness, and your love, are felt and treasured! I'm strengthened by it! I'm shocked so many took the time to read all 2,819 words! (Yeah, as a reformed, former white collar corporate type, I had it checked!) Please know that you made a difference. I'm a different man today than I was yesterday! Thank you and you are all doubly loved in return.

MR. BILL - Thank you, again, for the encouragement. I know what you mean about the phrase, "I'll keep you in my prayers." I tend to have an aversion to anything associated with clichéd western Christianity lingo but sometimes it's just true and heartfelt! Thank you!

TMK - Thank you. One thing I was overwhelmed with in these responses, through the Holy Spirit, is that yes, I truly am one of His! ::insert huge sigh of relief here::

INTHELIGHT - Thank you, Ron. That is my biggest prayer request and desire!

DOLFAN - Thank you, Tim. I can honestly say I love you and the rest of my family here, too!

FATHERSCHILD - Heartfelt thanks, Lois! I hesitate to say this because I know that the ability comes 100% from the Father Himself, but forgiveness is something comes easy to me. I hold absolutely nothing against my family. I know full well that they didn't come from loving homes themselves so they didn't know how to love. I simply see my family experience as nothing more than a fact in my testimony. It's something I've always been grateful for because I see so many struggle with forgiveness. And thank you for the prayers!

CALEB4LIFE - Your reply really struck me. The Psalm 51:17 verse you quoted was by the leading of the Holy Spirit, without a doubt. When I read that, I thought, "Wow, that does describe me." And I 'heard' the Holy Spirit confirm, "Yes. Finally..."

You said, "His love is contagious! As His love fills your heart, like a sponge gets filled with water, my prayer is that you will be "squeezed out" over others that need His love as well!"

This is how I've been my whole life, even before I became a Christian. I was always determined to show love towards everyone because I knew how NOT being loved felt. It's one of the reasons why everyone always called me a "goody-two-shoes." In the workplace, I would constantly hear things like, "What do you want? Nobody is THAT nice for no reason. You WANT something!" I had people tell me they hated being around me because "you make me feel guilty!" I even tried to change and not be so "nice" all the time. It didn't work. I can stand up for myself and, if I'm not careful, I can let my temper fly and make grown men cry by going off on them. I'm not smart enough to be afraid of anyone. But, I really have to be pushed to get to that point. So, I don't want to come across as I'm perfectly loving all the time, but it's something God definitely put into my make-up.

Thank you for replying with everything you did and the wonderful encouragement!

JFW - Fletcher, your post put me over the edge into the ugly cry. When I read the excerpt you quoted from Leonard Ravenhill (a very personal favorite of mine), it was answered prayer... in spades, personally autographed and presented on a silver platter. I remember telling God that I wished I could speak to Leonard Ravenhill and get a personal response from him. That, Fletcher, is exactly what that was! I tremble at even saying that because I don't ever want to be arrogant and proud, but the Holy Spirit was all over your post and that quote. It felt like I was taken by the shoulders, looked at straight in the eyes and personally spoken to. It was followed up with these words: "You may not understand but will you continue to trust Me?" Every bit of worry about being invisible and not being understood disappeared right there. I can breathe again. Thank you so much!

BROTHAGARY - Thank you for that wonderful assurance. It read like the benediction to the previous reply and encouraged me tremendously, brother!

TRUEWITNESS - Thank you. That Lone Ranger Christian stuff, even though it wasn't intentional, is not good for any Christian. And it's not good for the Body as a whole!

I know this will sound strange after reading my testimony, but a healthy identity is something I've had most of my life! Even as a kid, when my parents were mean to me, I knew it had nothing to do with me. I remember thinking, "I hope they get better soon!" I knew I was a "good boy." Then, when I became a Christian, I recognized that that was God who placed that desire to love others in me. I didn't come across to anyone, even those who rejected me, as needy, desperate or clingy. I didn't even come across as not having an identity. It was the exact opposite. But, once I allowed myself to get so beaten down and fall into self-pity mode (let's be honest and call a spade a spade), THAT'S when I lost my identity in Him. This thread helped me to really see this clearly.

And, for the record, as much as I've been hurt by family, friends, and churches, ultimately I AM RESPONSIBLE for getting into the state I was in (and am now coming out of). I am responsible for my relationship with Jesus and trusting Him. It'

s not conditional on how others treat me. Yes, I was beaten down and I let the enemy hold me down for a very long time! It's not how you start, but it's how you finish that really does matter!

There's a lot of truth in the insight you gave. I've been fully aware of being performance based with my acceptance of God's love. But even being aware of that didn't change it in me. I am indeed the stubbornest of all men. Your insight has been received and welcomed, brother. And it's being put to use.

BRENDA7 - Thank you, Brenda. I think it was more desperation than bravery but the Holy Spirit is using it! Your formative years were certainly not a picnic either. I can't imagine going through all of that. The one thing that has always, always helped me - even through this current difficult period - is knowing that God could be trusted with everything. The girl that drove me around a small town of 900 people for four hours, telling me about Jesus, said a VERY important thing to me that made ALL the difference during EVERY trial of my life. And I now say it to everyone I tell about Jesus: "You either need to believe that what the Bible says is true; that it's the inspired, inerrant Word of God Himself and that every word is true and still applies today, or that it's one big fairy tale. There is no in-between. There is no picking it apart to take this and toss that. It can only be one or the other." I immediately and forever accepted it as God's real words to be believed and trusted for everything. That belief has been an anchor that's saved me through many storms.

FATHERSCHILD - Thanks so much for the encouragement, Lois. I hope God WILL use my 33 years of wilderness wandering and preparation as a warning to others to take responsibility for their relationship with Him and to redeem the time while we still have time to work and make a difference! As for Matthew 7:21-23, I can say that I feel better that they will not be spoken to me. Those are the most terrifying words in all of scripture to me and those are the people that are really on my heart to reach! Can you imagine living your whole life, believing you would go to heaven, only to be rejected with those words? To reject God entirely from the start is one thing, but to expect heaven and head to hell would be unbearable agony!

Re: - posted by Fatherschild (), on: 2016/4/29 14:52

Amen Keith, the Lord™s been speaking that word to me lately about redeeming the time.
Love and Blessings

Re: - posted by mama27, on: 2016/4/29 14:55

I don't have anything profound to say after reading all that others have written. Just know that when I read your post I was choked up, and deeply felt your heart. Your experience especially resonated b/c even while raising 7 children for Christ, I have heard a couple of mine share something very similar. It is anguishing. Truly the work of God in a human heart is something that ONLY HE can do....I do pray that He will continue to meet you just exactly where you are as He is the One Who created you! I am so glad that you feel the love from many here :)

Re: - posted by AlmostHome (), on: 2016/4/29 15:42

LOIS: Redeeming the time is so important right now. This is the only time we have left to affect the kingdom and our rewards before entering eternity. I have no clue what those rewards are or what we're going to do with them, but we're instructed to go for them! I'm desperate to not show up to the party empty-handed and ashamed.

MAMA27: If profoundness were a qualification to love, I'd surely be hopeless and without qualification. Thank you for the thoughtful and encouraging words. Growing up was hard enough. But trying to parent after that? I couldn't imagine!

Re: Blessings - posted by savannah, on: 2016/5/5 8:23

Keith,

You my friend, have brought this man to tears, literally, with your testimony. I don't often read long posts but I read yours, every word of it.

Makes me think of what one man said to me almost twenty years ago, he said, "_____, God wastes no pain!"

I have never forgotten that. I was at a time in my life that I thought my world had come to an end.

I myself have also known the depths of despair on many occasions, and have also kept in my heart all these years something else that someone had said, they said, "Never trust a man who hasn't suffered."

Not many men can relate to books like, "The Mute Christian Under the Smarting Rod", by Thomas Brooks. Or, "The Crook in the Lot", by Thomas Boston. I'd highly recommend these, along with "A Treatise on Self Denial" by Thomas Manton. These books are not for the faint of heart, nor are they for casual reading. They cut to the heart, and help the Christian get a proper diagnosis of himself, his trials, and of his Great God who does all things from the perspective of His Love for us.

I didn't intend to write all this when I started. So let me just end by saying this, I was so moved by your testimony that I had to reply and let you know. I'm not sure I can express in words on a forum just how much I was moved. So I'll just leave you with a song that may do just that.

I am not driven by emotions, but neither am I a rock which doesn't feel nor have them.

I can honestly say that, each and every time I've listened to this song, which has been many a time, it has brought me to tears, literally. And like most every song, there's quite a story behind why this one was written. Well, here it is;

"Laura Story - Blessings"
<https://youtu.be/1CSVqHcdhXQ>

Bless the LORD my friend Keith.

From one who has been blessed by God!

Re: Feedback - posted by Jeremy221, on: 2016/5/5 14:43

Hi AlmostHome,

I didn't have the same reaction as all the others and perhaps I will receive your ire as a result.

You described yourself as a goodie two shoes and that your behavior as a white collar, corporate type convicted your coworkers because it was too nice. Perhaps you aren't listening to yourself nor the AMAZING TESTIMONY AND WARNING you meticulously crafted.

Over and over you talked about looking for acceptance. You wanted it from your parents, family and ultimately coworkers. You have tried to manipulate them through being nice, as you stated, you have done this for far longer than you had any knowledge of God or the cleansing work of the Holy Spirit. That makes all your goodie-goodie, making nice and friendliness filthy rags because it is your own good works. You claim it is a good work from before having any knowledge of the holiness of God, are you greater than Paul who far surpassed anything you accomplished?

You have done the same to the saints here on SI. You purposely titled this thread to garner the attention of other similar threads so that it would be read and receive views which in turn would bring more views, with that comments and yet more views and more comments.

Your writing style comes across like that of the weird occultic, self-help stuff that comes in the mail unwarranted. It comes promising great knowledge and power over people to achieve success in business and relationships but it reeks of the darkness of Satan.

So my comment is this, don't post in self importance nor trying to manipulate the saints to get attention. Sermon Index is a ministry started for and sustained by the glory of God. Lay off the positioning and self-flattery and speak honestly for once. You have been lying to yourself and others about your intentions for decades. Take off your mask, you're welcome to come as you are.

I commend this book by Art Katz titled "The Spirit of Truth." You need a crossing over where "it is no longer I who live." God is patient and His saints as well. SI has the purpose of facilitating revival corporately and individually.

Miracles that follow the plow :: Prayer Request with Testimony and Warnings.

<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/singlefile.php?lid=25563&commentView=itemComments>

You may have a lot of things to get off your chest which may result in tussles with others here as you work out your faith with fear and trembling. Don't give up.

And welcome to Sermon Index.