

Testimony

Sally Cano Tells Her Story

Rescued and Saved at Culvers



I grew up on a small farm in Wisconsin. My parents tried to raise me and my brother and sister in the Catholic religion. My father was raised as a Roman Catholic in Cuba – so my parents thought they would continue the tradition. We attended services regularly every Sunday until I was five or six years old.

Sadness Enters Our Home

Our family life took a turn for the worse when my mother lost her closest sibling. My mother turned to alcohol to help her cope with her sadness and depression which led to alcoholism. From that point on, both my mother and father struggled with alcohol dependency.

No More Church and No More Confessions

It wasn't long before we stopped attending Catholic services. No longer attending church didn't bother me because I dreaded going to confession. In fact, I had only gone to confession once but that was enough for me. Although my mother told me to confess my sins to the priest, telling every detail of my sins to a complete stranger made me very uncomfortable. When the priest told me I was forgiven, I knew the burden of my sins remained. Deep down I knew I wasn't forgiven, because the sins I committed were against God, not against the Catholic Church.

Family Sadness Intensifies

As time went on, my family grew further and further apart. With my parents being disconnected, my sister and brother and I lived our own lives separately from each other. Increasingly, we spent our own time with our own friends doing the things each of us wanted to do.

Accomplishments despite Life's Adversities

My parents loved us deeply and they did their best to raise us up to respect others and to treat others kindly. I'm so thankful they did their best despite the addiction they suffered with every day. Because of their condition, I learned how to assume a lot of personal responsibility when I was young. Life taught me that. I did well through school, making honor rolls, attending school activities, and gaining lots of friends. I was the type of person to become friends with nearly everyone I met; but despite all of this, there was still an emptiness deep inside me that these things could not fill.

Emptiness

As time went on and addictions in my family worsened I began to feel depressed about my own life. The gnawing emptiness inside felt as though it were growing deeper and deeper and I wondered why no one loved me. I would look up to the sky on my knees and with tears think about my Creator who knew all about my emptiness.

Blaming God

I was so angry that God would even consider bringing me into this world. I wondered what purpose I had here. Was I here just to suffer with such a feeling of worthlessness and emptiness? Why did God bring me into this terrible world of disappointment and hurt? I was so mad at Him and I wanted to end my life, but I just couldn't bring myself to do it. I was afraid of worsening the addictions with which my family already suffered, plus the fact I was too afraid of what would come before me on the other side. I knew if God were to review my life after I died that He would rightfully see the filth of my attitude and actions. He knew all of the immoral things I had said and done, whether small or great. I could not hide my transgressions from Him.

My First Job

I began coping with my dark inner sadness by going to parties as a teenager and hanging out with others who grew up in broken homes. It was my way of ignoring the emptiness and lonesomeness I felt. I was 15 years old when I got my first job; it was at Culvers, a fast food restaurant in Viroqua. My parents let me use their spare car to drive to and from work after school and on the weekends.

It Happened at Culvers

Two years later the Lord showed me just how much He really did love me. I was seventeen by this time and the summer of 2007 was just coming to an end. I was at work and we had just finished up with our typical lunch hour rush. I was working behind the front counter washing up some trays when Brittany, a best friend of mine and a coworker at the time, came rushing to me from the dining room. She wanted me to meet some motorcyclists that she had been talking to who happened to be passing through. Brittany's mother was also a biker which is what intrigued her to talk with them.

My Friend Begs Me to Meet the Bikers

"We're still on the clock," I told her. "If the boss sees me talking to people instead of working, I'm going to get in trouble." But Brittany begged me to meet these people. She showed me a special coin they had given to her. She told me that if I went and talked with them that I could probably get a coin also. Again I replied, "No, I can't; I could really get into trouble for this." A third time, she pleaded with me to just go and meet them quick.

I checked to see if my manager was nearby, and since he wasn't in sight, I finally decided to go quickly to the dining room to meet the bikers. Just to be on the safe side, I took a sweeper with me. If my manager found me chatting, it would seem as though I was still doing something productive.

Motorcyclists with a Cause

Brittany introduced me to the Bikers. The lead biker told me his name was Wayne Bredahl. The first question he asked me was: "Do you want to know what we ride for Sally?" Interested by his question, I asked him: "What do you ride for?" Wayne smiled and said, "We ride for Christ." I smiled back and nodded my head saying, "That's nice." I remember thinking to myself that that's good; you can ride for whatever you would like to.

Deep Probing Question

It wasn't until Wayne directly asked me, "Are you a sinner?" that I began to consider who it was that he rode for. Of all the kinds of questions one could ask, this one hit me hard. How is it that this man, who doesn't even know me, knows the burden I carry around? Could he see it in my countenance or in my expression somehow? How did he know that my shortcomings, my failures, and my heavy load of immoral sin troubled me so strongly?

Taken back by his question about my sin, my eyes began to tear, as I looked at the ground. The shame I had felt from my life swept over me in that instant. Although no one had ever taught me the Ten Commandments, my conscience told me what sin was. When I did bad things like lying to my parents, going to parties, or drinking, I knew that it was sinful and immoral.

Every Sin Can be Erased

So to the biker's question: "Are you a sinner?" I replied: "I have done some really bad things that I wish I could take back." Wayne soon asked, "What if I told you that you could be forgiven?" With, I am sure, a longing in my eyes, I looked back up at him and said, "I would love that!"

The Moment that Changed Everything

At that moment, I wondered how all of the sins I had done in my past could possibly be forgiven when they had already been committed? Wayne then asked "What if I told you that Jesus Christ died to forgive you of your sins?" I had always heard the stories of Jesus Christ, but it was right then, at that moment in Culver's dining room, that I realized why He came, died, and rose again on the third day. Christ died for ME – for MY sins! God didn't hate me. He had a purpose for me. He loved me so much that He sent His only Son, Who had no sin, to die a painful death on a cross – yes, for me! What kind of love is this, that one would give His own life to save an undeserving sinner from the burden and penalty of my own sinful way?

I had finally realized and truly felt what love was. The heavy weight of my toilsome sin and the painful memories of my life disappeared in that moment. Joy filled my soul when I realized that my sins were put away at Calvary, when Christ, on that wooden cross bled and died.

Loved, Safe, Secure and Joyful

Nothing in my past can separate me from His love, because He put my sinful past away when He finished the work on the cross. God is satisfied with me because of the sacrifice of His Son for my sins. I can joyfully say that I am forgiven. I have a purpose, and a sure hope that cannot be shaken or taken away. My life has been changed. My sin debt was finally cleared when, in that moment, the Christ I had only heard of as an historical religious figure, became my very own Savior. He died to set me free from a life of emptiness, sin, and ultimately eternal hell.

Exactly What I Needed

Before Wayne and the three other riders rode off, he gave me a coin with John 3:16 on it.

For God so loved the world,
that He gave His only begotten Son,
that whosoever believeth in Him
should not perish,
but have everlasting life.

He gave me his card, joyfully hugged me, and then the three of them got on their bikes and went on their way. My joy, to this day, still remains because of the proven love and full security I have in Christ Jesus, who died on the cross years ago for me and my sins.

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