

# Testimony

Heath Adamson Tells His Story

## Her Prayers Helped Pull Me Out of Occult-Fueled Madness



While I plunged further into darkness, a middle-school classmate kept lifting me up to God.

I started walking in the valley of the shadow of death at a very young age. In first grade, I became aware of something: What you see is not all there is.

The spiritual world was real to me, even as a child, because of my engagement with the occult. What started out as intrigue and entertainment quickly led to a lifestyle of encounter with the stuff of Hollywood lore. I remember watching a chair slide across the floor and a candle floating off the coffee table. I saw things no one should see.

You can't immerse yourself in the occult for long without going on a journey you cannot reverse on your own. I had night terrors so bad, so horrific, I was tormented for years. In junior high, the anxiety produced ulcers. Specialists couldn't confirm what was wrong. I felt trapped, breathless, and alone.

My experiences with the supernatural led me on a quest for answers. In many ways, I was a typical boy, the kind who enjoyed basketball, skateboarding, and GI Joe cartoons. But I also studied religion and philosophy. I was gripped by an all-consuming desire to find a language or a belief system to describe my regular interactions with the unseen world.

### **'Pray for That Young Man'**

Eighth grade was a pivotal year. On the outside, I looked like a quintessential American teenager. Taking a break from the occult, I enjoyed school, engaged in athletics, and certainly didn't look like someone immersed in darkness.

One day, as I was standing at my school locker, a female classmate sensed in her heart that God was whispering my name. (I wouldn't learn this, of course, until later.) The whisper said something to the effect of, "Pray for that young man. You are going to marry him one day." Some of life's most significant moments come disguised with the ordinary. She dared to slow down long enough to listen to the whisper and believe.

We struck up a relationship befitting middle-schoolers. I remember going to her home and eating her mom's macaroni and cheese. She came and watched me play basketball. She was just perfect in every way. We even told people we were going to get married one day.

But when the school year ended, we went our separate ways and formed our own friend groups. She was a cheerleader and attended church. I, on the other hand, delved further into the darkness than ever before. I had regular encounters with the demonic realm, became addicted to numerous drugs, looked like a human skeleton, and lived life in quiet desperation.

In my junior year of high school, after getting high during lunch break, I went to physics class. We dropped balls down ramps and calculated velocity. One day, while I was tripping on LSD, my physics partner noticed my odd behavior. He wasn't the sort to spend time with others who hallucinated and, frankly, I didn't talk to people who hadn't. As was my custom, within a few minutes, I began asking him about religion. I was curious to know whether he believed in God, what proof he could cite for his beliefs, and whether he knew the supernatural realm like I did. He didn't say much, but he did invite me to church. I actually went.

People were singing, lifting their hands, clapping, and listening to the pastor read from the Bible. I left thinking they were a bit strange and remained uninterested. But I had no idea what was about to happen, for another invitation was coming.

On a Sunday night, after the effects of crystal meth wore off, I said goodbye to my friends and went home. I lay in my bedroom, alone, unable to sleep, once again sitting in quiet desperation. My mind raced, thinking about who God was and what the truth could be. I remember the warm tears falling down my face. Crying wasn't something I did. It was almost as if the sky opened up and, for the first time in my life, I sensed real and pure love.

I felt like God himself had come into my room. I remember saying out loud, "Jesus, you are who you say you are." It didn't seem like he was angry with me, ashamed of who I had become, or appalled at my choices. Deep inside, I believed he loved me the way I was.

Night after night, once school and work were over, I couldn't wait to get home and talk to God. This was the first time in a long time that I remained sober. God's presence was so thick, so real, that I could almost feel him breathing in my face.

I told my physics partner I would go back to church with him on a Wednesday night. I said, "Remember that thing the pastor did at the end of church a few weeks ago? He asked if people wanted to ask Jesus to forgive them. Well, I think I need to do that."

I ended up going to one of the most dysfunctional church services in history.

### **A Surprise in the Mail**

I walked in wearing my tie-dyed shirt with a marijuana leaf on the chest. Rather than singing and preaching, I heard crying and yelling. I found out that they were having a "family meeting" because one of the congregants had made threats against the pastor. The youth group was hearing an explanation for why the threat-maker's family, which included two teenagers, would never be back. People were angry and devastated. The police were there. I knew one of the officers well, as he used to search my car on weekends. I felt right at home in the dysfunction.

At the end of the meeting, a volunteer pastor (who happened to be the father of my physics partner) said a prayer and shared the gospel. On that night, I responded to the opportunity to meet Jesus. I was the only one who responded. That night, when I embraced the grace of Jesus, I experienced some fairly remarkable things. My body was supernaturally and instantaneously healed. My substance addictions vanished. It's almost as if I met myself for the first time.

The very next day, I discovered something incredible in the mailbox. I can't recall why I checked the mail that day. I seldom did. Inside was a handwritten letter from the girl who dared to listen in eighth grade when God touched her heart. Though she had written the letter a few weeks before, she was compelled to hold on to it. One day, while walking through the shopping mall, she was impressed again in her heart, and she mailed it. It just happened to land in our mailbox the day after I met God.

After I married that amazing girl, my beloved Ali, I found her prayer journals. That's when I discovered how God used the prayers of her and others, often whispered when no one was watching, to help soften my hardened heart. Looking back at my salvation, I can't help thinking of Psalm 23. The psalmist makes it clear that God prepared a table not while he was luxuriating in green pastures but while he was trudging through the valley of the shadow of death. I am the product of a girl who dared to believe when God whispered, an invitation to church, the power of prayer, and the Savior who stepped into my darkness and, instead of turning away in horror, showed me who he was and who I was created to be.

*Heath Adamson is chief of staff for the relief organization Convoy of Hope.  
... Gleaned from Christianity Today*