

Testimony

Conrad Hunchak Tells His Story

Good Bye, Bottle - Hello Peace!

In 1959, I was a farm-boy, who had quit teachers' college to avoid a life in classrooms. I veered in a totally new direction, and got a more physical job with a pipeline company. That is where I began trying keep up with the other heavy-drinking men.

The following spring I began an engineering career with the Dept. of Highways in Saskatoon. The following year I was transferred to North Battleford, and while working at Meadow Lake, I met my wife, Lynne, and we married in 1963. I introduced Lynne to alcohol.



We were blessed with two girls and a boy, but by the late seventies, both my wife and I would go to the bar every Thursday and Saturday night, and stay there until it closed.

As the girls got to be school aged, they wanted to go to Sunday School with their friends at a mainline church. I was born on a farm 17 miles south of Blaine Lake and the oldest of five. Our parents were poor, but they had taught us to work hard, and they had taken us to church regularly. I even had a vague memory of going to Vacation Bible School at about ten, so I would drive my wife and the girls to church every Sunday morning.

After a while I decided that I might as well sit inside the church too, but usually we sat in the second row from the front, suffering from a hangover from the night before.

I made my own wine, and often drank alone. I provided for my family, but I was not nice to my wife.

In 1979 my wife and I decided to take the family to Disneyland. My plan was to walk out on my wife and kids after we got back. Why? Because alcohol was ruining our relationship. I was ready to leave everything behind.

However, you know what they say about the "best-laid plans of mice and men" A little while later my wife informed me that she was pregnant again. The Disney trip was gone, so were my plans.

Our youngest daughter was born in 1980. My plans were put on hold. My wife, Lynne, became a believer soon after the birth of our last child. She and her mother tried to talk to me of Jesus, but I was not interested.

I tried to quit drinking. I would quit for a little while and then start again. I couldn't quit; I was finally convinced that I was an alcoholic. My back was up against the wall. I needed help.

Two years later I was working north of Loon Lake, and staying at a cabin at Pine Cove. One night I decided that maybe Jesus could help me. On that Tuesday night I knelt beside my bed and asked God for forgiveness for not being the husband, and the father that I should be, and for not following Him. "I need help with my alcohol. Help me!" I told Jesus that I believed that He died for me and then I asked Him to come into my heart and be my Lord and Saviour.

I still remember the peaceful sleep I had that night.

It wasn't long before my wife and I were both hungry for spiritual food, but we saw that the church we were attending didn't have it. I still drank, but had cut down a lot. I became hungry for God's Word and began reading and have never quit.

In March of 1984 we both had our last drink. The next month we began attending a Bible preaching church. Later that same month I went downstairs and poured nearly 200 bottles of wine down the drain. (The sewer rats must have had a good time).

That same year our three older children and our oldest daughter's boyfriend all became believers. In the fall of that year all of us were baptized. Life took on a new meaning. Two of our children and our son-in-law went to Bible School.

Since I put God first in my life He has looked after me. In 1995 He called me into ministry and I have served as a pastor of Hafford Gospel Fellowship for 13 years.

I had a major heart attack in 1996; my family were all called, as it was understood I was going Home - to Heaven. I knew what was happening and kept thinking of the words in a favourite hymn of mine which say, "Jesus, I come to You." After I was stabilized and knew that my going Home was being delayed, I repeated the words of a chorus that says, "God is so good, He's so good to me."

I have been off heart medication for three years. Praise the Lord.

God opened another door when I began doing "Overcomer's in Christ" addiction classes. Time does not permit me to share how God is working on the hearts of people who had no hope and now are becoming His children.

God has done so much in my life and has used me to touch the lives of other people. He has gifted me far beyond my expectations in reaching people with the gospel. Just last year I was His instrument in having 24 people give their hearts to Jesus, all in one-on-one conversations.

. . . . *Conrad Hunchak*