



# *Madeline's Testimony*

I grew up going to church like most other kids, knowing what the gospel was and what Jesus had done for me, but I had never had a true understanding. My life was all about myself – I had no love for scripture and I was in no way interested in pursuing my relationship with our Great God.

Many years had passed by and I eventually reached my teenage years, I thought they were going to be the best years of my life.... I never knew that there would be obstacles, walls I had to knock down, mountains I had to and move, bridges I had to build that would help me get over my problems.

JOHN 15:5 "I AM THE VINE, YE ARE THE BRANCHES: HE THAT ABIDETH IN ME, AND I IN HIM, THE SAME BRINGETH FORTH MUCH FRUIT: FOR WITHOUT ME YE CAN DO NOTHING!"

I wish somebody had told me this 20 years ago.... little did I know.

Anyway, years went by and along came Prince Charming. I was swept off my feet and was married for 8 years before the Devil struck my marriage. In those 8 years, we were really happy and doing quite well for a young couple. The Lord blessed us with four children; we were actually the envy of our extended families and friends. Back then neither I nor my husband were fully committed to God. I was a Christian but a half-hearted type.

Having such a big family had its pressures; my husband needed to work day and night to make ends meet, and my role as a loving wife just happened to increase as my family got bigger: I had to become a fulltime Nurse, a psychologist, a Teacher, a chauffeur, a Maid, a Cook..... also a Referee – Believe it or not, there are times when my little angels grew horns. Fights

would break out between them, and that's when I had to blow the whistle to restore the peace.

As my family grew bigger, so did the Burden in my marriage; we started to drift apart from each other, what used to be right was now wrong.....

My relationship hit rock bottom. It was taking a toll on the whole family. This graduated to episodes of abuse towards each other. I was confused, but I did not seek help. For the next 5 years, this went on and off and I pretended all was well just hoping that one day I would wake up and it would all go away. As time went by, the frequency and intensity of abuse increased and I began to seek means and ways to cushion myself from being hurt.

My pride wouldn't allow me to ask for help.... My marriage had been perfect but it suddenly turned sour... I couldn't understand how at one time we were the best of friends but now we were fast becoming enemies. In the 2 years that followed, life became totally unbearable and the abuse turned to threats. By then I had read about domestic violence and the psychological effects it was having on my children... I was also unaware to the fact that I was also contributing to it by my reactions and actions.

Proverbs 30:33 – For pressing milk produces curds, pressing the nose produces blood, and pressing anger produces strife.

OH BOY THAT'S SO TRUE ... COZ I WAS THE QUEEN IN RUBBING SALT INTO THE WOUND....

My marriage was like a boat in the ocean, 1 minute it would be running smoothly and then the next minute a storm hits it with wild wind, high sea, violent battering. The CHILDREN tried to steer the boat to safety but they were helpless... I couldn't understand what was happening to my family.... This RAGING STORM was going to have massive destruction to MY HOME, MY FAMILY, and MY MARRIAGE. I felt like the men on the boat with Jesus.... I wanted the easy way out, I wanted to jump off the boat and swim to safety

before everything fell apart. I needed time out, I needed to get away for a while, after all; distance apart makes the heart grow fonder.

So I decided to head to Lebanon with the kids for about 3 months. I thought it would do us a world of good- but unfortunately it made our relationship worse.

There's a saying that says: When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom. I guess my pride stopped me from admitting my disgrace; after all, I was born under Satan's influence.

My natural instinct is to follow the ways of the world, I had to attempt everything, I wanted to know everything, and I needed to see what the world had to offer. My thoughts kept me distracted with the ways of the world, and when I had reached adulthood, the ways of my thinking had blocked me from God. I couldn't change the ways of my thinking on my own, I didn't know how to end being anxious, bitter, resentful, and self-centered. I didn't know how to be content, happy, truthful, appreciative or easy going .... There is no medicine to cure this disease....

I now know why God himself says in Hosea 4:6 **“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...”**

If I had known then what I know now, I would not have been captured by the devil the way he did. Time after time I kept on having this guilty feeling my conscience wouldn't leave me alone.

I once read this verse somewhere and it says, **“Some people come into our lives and leave footprints in our hearts and we are never ever the same.”**

After that trip to Lebanon, I met Charlie and Janet and began attending this church and having Bible studies. I was eager to hear from God's Word.

Then a few months ago, I returned to Lebanon for another visit. Well, I met this precious soul towards the end of my stay in Lebanon who embedded a

HUGE footprint in my heart. This soul led me to Jesus Christ my Saviour. After we talked for hours and hours, I finally realized my own sinfulness and realised that I needed to deal with that before I dealt with any of my problems...

The guiltiness of my sins was having a toll on my life .I couldn't believe that God could wash away my sins. I suddenly had this feeling that I needed to be in a dark quiet place, I needed time with God.

It was **Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> of June 2012** when this precious soul which I had only met once took me to this really small and dark church, it was built like a cave. As soon as I walked onto this church I got the shivers. This precious soul gave me her Bible and told me to read Psalm 25. The Bible was flooded with my tears. Every single word from Psalm 25 felt like it was being engraved into my heart. I felt the essence of Jesus surrounding me. The joy that filled my heart was unique; I had never experienced anything like that before. The burden in my heart was lifted; I realized that Jesus has filled its place.... Jesus is the light in my life... I stand strong through his love; I'm no longer a slave to sin, but a woman of God. With him I am learning patience and also to fear not. I came to understand that it was only by His grace and Christ's death in my place that He could ever accept me.

My desire now is to glorify my Saviour Jesus Christ, who died for my sinful soul and my anti-God state of mind and heart? Is there anything worth more than my soul?

Jesus is my Creator!! He didn't put me on this earth to fend for myself. What do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul?

When I realized that this is true, and believed it, then I was able to submit every aspect of my life to him.

I have learnt that I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me. Without Jesus I am nobody and can do nothing. God has given me a growing

desire to read His words and given me love for him that I didn't have before. Also my actions have changed, I have begun to live for him.

My life has been restored; there is a sense of peace, Joy, Happiness, Hope, and most of all – LOVE.

I have so much love to give!!!

For the first time in years, my husband and I have sat down to discuss our marriage, the sorrow and pain we have gone through. We have agreed to cast all our past into the ocean and promised each other to never go fishing in that ocean again. I believe that this was the vital time of complete healing and forgiveness. We both acknowledged the hurt we caused each other.

I believe, that God has opened this door and whatever God opens, no man can shut.

My husband and I have decided to use our testimony, to help other people that are going through the same challenges to understand that, it is a spiritual warfare and our weapons are not physical.

We need to have God in our marriage. The battle belongs to God because he is the creator of marriages and He needs to defend His institution.

Jesus is the head of my husband, my children, myself, – you name it. I'd sacrifice my life if He asked me to. I pray to Him every day, I read His word every day, and it's rare that an hour goes by that I don't think of Him.

JESUS had no Servants, yet they called Him master.

JESUS had no degree, yet they called Him teacher.

JESUS had no medicine, yet they called Him healer.

JESUS had no army, yet kings feared Him..

JESUS won no military battles, yet He conquered the world.

JESUS committed no crime, yet they crucified Him.

JESUS was buried in a tomb, yet He lives today. It's an honor to serve such a Saviour... With all my love I share my testimony with you. Call upon the Lord Jesus Christ and watch what He will do for you. God bless you all.