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Christa's Story



My name is Christa and I would like to share how wonderful a life with Jesus is after 17 years of pure hell. I grew up in Oakland, Calif. Both my parents worked and my father was in the Marine Corp Reserves as a Lieutenant Colonel. My brother is 15 years older than

me, and my mom was a self-employed bookkeeper.

With my dad being in the reserves, I remember him being gone a couple weeks at a time. Yet when I was little, it seemed like a really long time and I always felt kind of abandoned. My mother was never the nurturing kind or loving type. Actually, I was always in her way. Both my parents drank regularly—daily—yet worked and functioned.

When I was 5 years old, my life changed forever. My childhood was immediately in chaos. I began to be sexually abused by my brother. Fear, confusion and self-hatred began to overwhelm me on a daily basis. Shame and guilt began to define me. At that young age, you begin to not live but survive.

I didn't really understand why he was touching me and instantly believed I was at fault. As I got older, he made threats and fear gripped me and confusion overwhelmed me. I couldn't understand how my parents didn't see, or didn't protect me. I remember thinking "maybe if I'm *really* good, it will stop." I didn't like the sport my parents and brother liked (soccer) so I felt like an outsider because of that too. So maybe *that* was a reason, I thought! By the time I was 11, my brother had fully raped me, and I quickly found alcohol, cigarettes and marijuana. When I was 15, I found cocaine, and at 17 meth. And meth became my best friend until I was 32 years old.

The abuse lasted until I was 15. At that point, custody of me was given to the Court. Again, I was abandoned and felt unloved, unwanted and unworthy. See, the enemy came in with his lies as early as age 5! As my wounds got deeper and deeper, I embraced, welcomed and believed those lies. And that led to a life of drug addiction, crime and pure hell. Where there was no control, I tried to gain control, selling meth, manufacturing meth, and with the people that I was involved with—not only did I live in hell, I delivered hell to others! For things I did almost 13 years ago, I should still be behind bars. I was so full of hate, rage and hurt—and that's what I made sure to spread.

I would like to make it clear, I am in NO WAY glorifying the story, looking for someone to feel sorry for me for what I endured as a child. I am only glorifying the power of God's love.

There are many years of abusive relationships and pain. At age 21, I gave birth to my amazing, golden hearted son James. I was not yet in the worst of my addiction, but by far the most scariest, and worst of any physical abuse I have ever endured. Fear and shame were like my right and left arm. Self hatred was my face I saw when I looked in the mirror, not to mention the lost person I was. Drugs were my absolute best friend. They were always there for me. They gave me the escape I desperately needed. They gave me comfort and helped me feel like the pain was not there. I would rather die, than feel or think of anything. When I say anything, I mean my son, my childhood abuse.

When I finally did tell about my brother, no one ever did anything. So I wished I had never said a word! When I thought about my son, what kind of mother was I? Addicted to drugs to the point that I would rather be high than be a momma to a perfect gift. Wow! More self hate.

So at age 32, finally my criminal life began to catch up with me, and I was facing real jail time for my 17-year run, and for the first time, my parents stopped enabling me. The judge gave me Prop 36 for 90 days or to a program. Little did I know it was a faith-based, Christ-centered place.

In the first 60 days, I was as hard as a brick wall. I was so angry, especially at God. I wanted nothing to do with Him. Thankfully, by my 90th day, He had literally done a miracle and began to get a hold of my heart.

The first two years of my sobriety were just that—sobriety. And oh, how important that was and is! For the past 11 years what has been the key to my staying on this path of wholeness and freedom, is everyday making the choice to continue with Jesus. Choices are what it boils down to. Every step of my journey, my choices have determined where I am. I have sought and continue to build a solid relationship with Jesus. I have had inner healing in many areas. God has restored so much of my life, by me simply trusting Him to do so, little by little. Forgiveness is key, accountability is key, humility, meekness, God's love and His truth.

Today, I am married to a wonderful man and my 24-year-old son has given me a beautiful grandson. My life is not perfect, but I'm in light not darkness, freedom not captivity, and I love not hate, give not take. —Christa

Resale Store Miracles

February of this new year started off with a tornado effect as God began to do mighty miracles for Captive Hearts.

Our Board of Directors voted to open a “resale” store, and days later, I was contacted by a dear friend, Joe Cortez, who was closing his store in Pismo Beach. He gave us his product as well as fixtures, thus began the miracles unfolding.

I contacted the owners of an empty building across the street from our office at none other than “911” Grand Ave. and rented it. In looking at the mess it was in, I wondered if there really was any value in it, as it was specifically in need of being gutted and rebuilt. Steve Williams, our Board member, began to see beauty from ashes and began the reconstruction. Two young men in recovery joined arms as well as Bill Honeycutt and the process started.

It was as if I was standing on the sidelines watching a movie as God begin to provide the funds we needed for the day as well as being able to pay the two young men who are “workers.”

I’m so excited as I write this article because the story has a two-fold meaning to me. God takes what people see as hopeless, dirty and unusable and begins the work of bringing beauty out of the their lives. Today, this building is absolutely beautiful: new carpeting, new bathroom, new paint and a brand new dwelling. Please make plans to come by and see the results of a lot of hard work and a place that will be used to touch lives on our coastline.

The proceeds will be used to establish our men’s home and add to the sponsorship fund that will enable more people to come into our programs.



Second Chances

GRAND OPENING
of Our New Resale Store

SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 2015

10:00 AM — 5:00 PM

911 West Grand Ave.

Grover Beach, CA 93433

(next door to Grover Beach Post Office)

Thanks Ladies of New Life!

Special thanks to the ladies at New Life Church who blessed our ladies and staff with Valentine’s baskets full of surprises and useful items. We so appreciate your love and support!



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Our Sincere Appreciation

to all those who have helped make this possible!

Steve Williams for all his expertise in renovating and overseeing the construction crew, Adrian, Keith, and Bill Honeycutt;

Shouts of Grace Church for \$1,000 to buy the carpet; Dwayne & Pam Fisher for helping to pay salaries for workers;

Joann Campbell, Dan & Pam Watson, Jeff & Jan Smith, LifeStylers Class and Lydia Chicks from Grace Bible Church, and all the volunteers who attended the staff meeting and gave offerings. We love you!



Steve is in his element taking these guys under his wing and teaching, training and overseeing them. We so appreciate all the hard work you guys put in during this renovation!

Bill Honeycutt was not there the day this photo was taken, but we are thankful for his part in making this happen as well!

We are so proud of you, Kayla, and for your graduating the program this past month. We stand behind you through all the paths ahead of you. And we really are glad to keep you on through your transition period. May God bring the perfect job for you in the days ahead!

