



Update

August 2017

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Calvary Bible Institute

I thought I would give a little information about Calvary International Bible Institute. People from both prison and the free world come to live on the base at Calvary Commission to go to school, many to earn degrees. They each have a unique story of how they met Jesus. The students attend chapel Monday thru Thursday at 8:00 a.m., have classes afterward, and work on the 186-acre base in the afternoons—the men usually in maintenance and the women office work. Fridays and Saturdays, they can work locally to earn money for their tuition and board. Some students already have job skills, and people are glad to hire them. ✨

Cleansed and Made Pure

Jessica was like all students when they first arrive—everything is new and they have a nervous look, but I noticed in chapel after about three weeks how freely she was praising and adoring God, swaying with both hands in the air. At first, I thought that she might be trying too hard, but as time went by she consistently worshipped the Lord in the same manner. I wanted to know where she learned to praise God like this. When I read her testimony, I was amazed at what God has done in her.

Jessica was born to Hippie parents in the Houston, Texas area, but grew up in Ft. Worth. Her mother had some Christian principles that made an impression on Jessica as a child, but her parents split up when Jessica was about three years old. It usually doesn't happen this way, but she lived with her father and visited her mother every other weekend for the next three years. Her mother attended church and at about six, Jessica started moving toward God when she prayed to receive Jesus as her Savior and was baptized. However, shortly afterward, the father took her and left the area,

and Jessica didn't see her mother for years.

Her Hippie father pretty much lived by the principle of no holds barred—anything goes. He smoked marijuana, did drugs, read pornography, drank alcohol, and engaged in sex orgies. *I was regularly exposed to all of these things, and I was taught these things were not only acceptable, but to be sought out. In these things is how you find joy and happiness, or so I was led to believe. In my earliest memories, I smoked marijuana with my dad anytime he had it. When I was an older girl, he also shared with me stories of past experiences of sex orgies with my mom and other things of this nature in his*

sexual experiences. What healthy things my mom had taught me were fast becoming a distant memory.

As a teen, she says, *I became addicted to cigarettes, drug use, sex, pornography, men, and money.* This eventually led to a pregnancy—thank God, she stopped doing drugs during her pregnancy—and she gave birth to a little girl. Because she was in no position to raise her, she gave her up for adoption to a Christian couple who couldn't have children. Praise God for His providential hand for the baby, but His hand was also at work in Jessica.

A little time passed and Jessica got married. She and her husband bought a house and had a measure of happiness, but she struggled deep within. She gave birth to another little girl, and for a time had a home. Her mother had come back into her life, but Jessica said her mom never spoke about Jesus to her again; however, Jessica would see her reading her Bible sometimes and this influenced her. Her mother later passed away.

She and her husband separated and Jessica, trying to deal with the pain of life, went back into hard drugs and an uncontrolled life, which led to prison. At 26, she went to prison, got out, but went back to the same lifestyle. During this first prison term, she made some attempt to read the Bible and listen to spiritual messages, but it

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didn't sink into her heart.

With each passing week, she was experiencing certain thrills on the surface, but deep in the heart there was a demand for something different. She didn't understand what was missing enough to find what to do about it.

The second time she went to prison, she became more serious. She longed for what she couldn't define and kept trying to find the "mysterious something" down inside. The Lord placed Dana, an inmate, in her life who knew the ways of the Lord. Jessica had a disturbing dream in which she thought her deceased mother was trying to speak to her. Dana said, *That's not your mom girl, that's God!*

Dana began to teach Jessica about the Lord and both were transferred to a faith dorm. Jessica was learning about the Lord, but she had not surrendered to Him—she tried talking the talk, but she wasn't walking the walk from the heart. When she got out of prison, she again fell away and went back into the same lifestyle.

The third time in prison, Jessica had reached the place that it was do or die. After about three weeks the drug fog began to clear. As it turned out, Jessica had her own

room for about four months. She used this time to do some soul searching. The Holy Spirit began to work in her, using the Bible knowledge she had learned earlier. She started moving toward God with sincerity this time.

I poured out my heart to Him continuously, memorized Scripture, led others to Christ, and was given my own prayer language with Him. He would bring up one thing at a time to me, and I would surrender it to Him. I had come to hate all those things that used to be my way to live. He took away desires for things I seriously thought would always be a part of my life. Some things I did not realize were bad until after much time spent in His Word and in prayer. He changed my thoughts, beliefs, and desires into His. He put it on my heart very quickly to go to a Christian based place instead of going home. I attended a church service and learned about Calvary Commission. I knew immediately this was where I was supposed to go.

It was in the faith-based prison services that she learned to praise and adore the Lord.

She testifies, *I used to fear asking for His will. Now, I not only want His will more than anything, but I know it is better than anything I could ever imagine following my own way. I easily understand Him talking to me now. There is not really any guessing anymore*

of whether I am in His will or if He is pleased with me. He does continue to bring up things to me for me to work on.

I enjoy and need my private time of devotion with Him every morning and as much as possible during the day. Feeding on His word daily is also essential to my peace and joy and to remain consistent in my walk. He has shown me many times how much greater His provision is than anything I could come up with on my own. I am eternally grateful to Him for taking my selfishness and helping me to see and live with Him as the center of everything.

Praise God, another one snatched from the clutches of the devil. ✨

Many Thanks!

I spoke of some financial need last month, and I want to report that several either gave above their regular support or gave a gift. Two people sent onetime offerings of \$500 each.

This greatly encouraged me and I want to thank all of you for your regular monthly support, and a Special Thanks for the well-timed gifts. Although our lifestyle is not expensive, we live in expensive times. Please remember to pray for me—I need your prayers.

Thanks again! ✨

A Taste of the Classroom

Teaching these students every week, I never cease to be amazed at the marvelous grace of God Who reaches into the messes we people make of our lives, and He draws us to Himself, cleanses our hearts, heals our minds and emotions so that the New Man can come forth in strength. Looking at Jessica's life in the natural, she didn't have a snowball's chance on a hot summer day. But God looked beyond her faults and saw her need—look at His marvelous work of grace!

I often say in class, "We are all in the same boat!" The other day in class we talked about "What is criminal or a crime?" When we reduce it to its lowest common denominator, a crime is when a person doesn't care about other people's unalienable rights and will violate them to their own selfish end. A crime is a transgression, being willing to step across a defined way of God for personal reasons outside God's right way.

I don't have an earthly rap sheet, but I certainly did have one in Heaven. So, that is why we can say, "We are all in the same boat." ✨
