



Update

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God Never Gave Up on Him!

Kevin is in my First and Second Corinthians class and is a joy to my heart as a teacher. He was on and off with the Lord until he made a heart commitment. He learned that sin has pleasure on the short run, but misery on the long run, and that no one can live the Christian life unless he is totally surrendered to Christ.

In class one day we were discussing “Let him who stands in his own self-assured confidence, take heed lest he fall.” The class discussion was about will power and saying we would never do a certain thing. Kevin made a powerful statement, something like this, *I learned not to say that I’m not going to do this or that. That is a waste of time and will more times than not lead to failure. Just obey and do what the Lord says! You have to rest in His power.*

Born in Marshall, Texas, Kevin’s parents divorced when he was two years old. This is rare, but they were good friends and Kevin told me that he didn’t feel the effects of the divorce. Both of them were involved in his life and they cooperated together. He lived with his mother who went to the First Presbyterian Church on special occasions. He received some bits of instruction in spiritual matters in VBS at the First Baptist Church in his town. Otherwise he was not raised in a Christian home.

At age 13 he began heading in the wrong direction. With the encouragement of others and his

own curiosity he started dabbling in smoking, drinking, and drugs. Even doing drugs from time to time, he somehow was able to maintain his school life and graduated in 1989. Itching to be independent, he moved out of his mom’s home after graduation. That summer he got a DWI and had other brushes with the law.

Apparently, his mom called in reinforcements after several problems. Kevin was at his mom’s house when his father showed up and asked him to get in his car. He drove to the nearby shopping center and went into a recruiter’s office. Kevin promptly joined the Navy! He said, *I entered the Navy as a drug addict and a drunkard.*

He didn’t do any drugs in the Navy but drank excessively. The Lord had some Christians on the ship who were a testimony, and he began to experience the dealing of God in his life. As the months rolled by, he began to experience the first convictions of sins in this life. Each time his ship dropped anchor in any port, he drank to the excess of drunkenness. But in the

long stretches at sea, sometimes as much as 30 days, his mind was clear, and the Lord began to draw him. He didn’t know exactly what this tugging was but looking back he now knows it was the wooing of the Holy Spirit.

He remembers, *After my ship returned from the Gulf War, I was granted leave and went to my mom’s in Texas for two weeks. One night I was alone in the living room flipping through the channels and landed on a Billy Graham Crusade. I listened and as the invitation was given I got on my knees and prayed right there in front of the TV. I prayed with sincerity through tears, confessing my sin and need for Jesus. However, nothing changed at the time, and I went on living life the same way.*

Even if he didn’t get born again in this experience, he made a commitment to the Lord and the Lord held him to it. He was moving toward God.

After Kevin got out of the Navy, he went to work for a small pharmaceutical company, rented an apartment, and continued living the party life. There was a young Christian also working there named John who had recently been saved and was on fire for Jesus. His very presence was a conviction to Kevin. John knew of Kevin’s party life and that he was coming to work under the influence of drugs, but being a new Christian, he didn’t know how to witness to Kevin.

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Kevin had spent a Friday and Saturday partying, but by Sunday morning he was feeling heavy conviction for the things he was doing. He said, *When I got to work Monday morning, I clocked in and went into a room and John was standing there looking me straight in the eye. He spoke four words to me, "Man, Jesus is Lord!" There was power in those words. The most supernatural thing I've ever experienced happened. Right after John said these words, my eyes were opened. I got born again!*

While all this was happening, Kevin met a girl at one of the parties and they eventually married. They started going to church and basically were living a right kind of life. Three years into the marriage she came home one night "messed up" on drugs. Kevin told me, *Instead of giving her proper direction and leading her to see this was not the way to go, I reacted, and I fell into using drugs again myself. We lasted five more years of misery. I kept working, but I grew tired of coming home and finding her "spaced out." She was a mess, and I told her if she didn't stop, I was gone. She was too far gone, had no will power left, and went even deeper trying to hide from the pain. I left. I was to find out that divorce is a living death, and now I foolishly started hiding my pain with drugs but was able to control them to keep my job.*

Kevin was in a recurring cycle of backsliding, recommitment, backsliding, and recommitment. An older couple who lived next door prayed non-stop for him. They could tell by his activities when he was going the wrong way.

He told me, *There is no denying the supernatural experience I had in 1995, so, why so much struggling over the years? There is only one answer—the enjoyment of sin.*

There was a hole in Kevin's heart that didn't get filled with the love and Lordship of Jesus, but God the Father continued working on his boy.

In 2014, Kevin was using drugs and buying drugs for a few acquaintances. The income from those sales was how he was supporting his habit. He never took the role of a drug dealer, but his acquaintances were quite willing for him to take the chances.

He was arrested for selling drugs and spent five months in the Gregg County Jail. This hitch in the jail served as a wake-up call, and after he went through withdrawals he began to stay in the Word of God and pray.

He sincerely committed his heart to the Lord. Sitting in a jail has a way of getting rid of all the pretense of a superficial lifestyle.

He was discussing with a fellow jail mate what to do when he got out of jail, and strangely enough that inmate strongly encouraged him to apply to Calvary Commission. After five months in the jail, he went to a state supported program designed to help people kick the drug habit. This program lasted nine months and when he was released, he came to Calvary Commission.

Little by little the roots of sin have been rooted out of his life in the last three years at Calvary Commission.

This coming September Kevin will have earned his Bachelor of Theology degree and will graduate at the end of the Annual Missions Conference. He is seeking the Lord as to what phase of ministry he will be in, but he knows it will be serving the Lord. He has become strong in the Lord. ✨

The Joy of Students Growing

In both of the classes I teach, *Basic Essentials of Christian Doctrine* from a practical approach to everyday life, and *First and Second Corinthians*, I write my own curriculum. This way I can somewhat tailor-make the lessons to meet their individual needs while still maintaining a theological education for them.

The age of my students in first-year class ranges from late 30s to almost 70. Most have been to prison and are pulling their lives together, desiring to faithfully serve the Lord.

When the students first arrive at the base, they usually stay quiet in class, and a little on guard. They are mostly all eyes to see what is going.

But as time goes by, living in an atmosphere of God's love, they begin to loosen up and start acting like a member of the family.

Recently, I saw a student, who was ever so quiet for several months, laughing and moving around in the classroom, joking and engaging others in conversation.

That's a breakthrough!

Thank you for praying for me and supporting me financially to minister to those who don't have the funds to support the ones teaching them. May God richly reward you. ✨

Thanks!

A reminder: If you want your gift to come directly to me, please mail it to the address on this newsletter. Make your check to "Calvary Commission" and you will receive a receipt for your tax-deductible gift at the end of the year.
