

A Sister's Testimonial

I was baptized into a well-meaning, but unable-to-deal-with-problems-very-well, ecclesia. And I was a problem. I was 19 and the single mom of a two-year-old daughter. I was never really a part of ecclesial life. It seemed I was always being by-passed and/or misunderstood. I recognized what was happening to me and requested a position teaching Sunday School as I knew this would strengthen me in ways I could not receive from those around me. I was granted my request but was shortly thereafter removed from the post because a couple self-righteous individuals did not want such a “bad example” teaching their children! That's when my fall went straight down-hill. After a couple years of neglect, coupled with down-right disdain in some instances (isolation within a group is so much harder than geographical isolation), I simply could not do it anymore. Life in the Truth with no moral support other than “You're bad ... You're wrong ... You need to change ...” was more than a young, lonely mother could stand. I left. For about 18 years!

Although I left physically, in my heart the Truth was always the Truth. Eventually, though, the time came that life got so hard, my heart began to harden. Thoughts like, “There is no God and I was a fool to believe.” pummelled me daily. Then, one day it happened.

God hit me over the head with a sledge-hammer! Boy, did He get my attention! It was like He was saying, “Oh yeah? I don't exist? Watch this!” He put me through a terrible crisis and pulled what was left of me out the other end. I do not want to know what would have happened to me if I had not turned to Him with my whole heart and begged and pleaded with Him. I turned to Him and He fixed everything.

When the crisis began, that night I turned to Him. I started attending meetings with a different ecclesia. I would not back down in my determination to do things right this time. It took the better part of a year to bring an end to the crisis and thereafter I requested refellowship. I was heart-broken when I was turned down because someone took issue with “appearances” of something kind I was doing for someone who had helped cause the crisis in the first place. Again, I prayed and begged and left the whole thing in God's hands. Two weeks later, the wonderful man who is now my husband fell into my lap, so to speak. I was refellowshipped with his help and we were married shortly thereafter. He was and is truly my gift from God.

We now live in relative isolation geographically and still have some hard-hearted people to associate with but we know we have God and each other and there is no turning back.

I often wonder what my life would have been like if someone, anyone, back then would have been able to help me with “growing up in the Truth”. Would my husband and I be together now? Would my daughter have joined God's family? But at the same time, I believe that for me, some lessons had to come hard in order to strengthen me for what lies ahead. He only knows. I just know that in young adulthood, I needed someone to help me that just wasn't there and my faith was not strong enough to weather the onslaught.