

Moving Forward

Mark Klein



My name is Mark Klein. I was born in 1969 in Monterey California and moved to Las Vegas Nevada while still a baby. My father was in the Army so I grew up with my mother. They divorced when I was very young yet I became very close to my mom. She remarried and I really didn't like my new step dad. There seemed to be drugs and alcohol around the house all the time. In fact that is where I was first introduced to drugs and alcohol.

Growing up as an only child, I had lots of freedom to do whatever I wanted. I eventually started breaking the law because I had no direction and felt little purpose. I was simply living for the thrill of the moment. It wasn't long before I ended up in jail for a short time during my teen years. I had dropped out of school, moved out on my own and found a job. This led me down a road of getting in more and more trouble.

Doing drugs and drinking became the norm. I really wasn't doing anything or heading anywhere good, I was simply existing and soon I became totally dependent on drugs and alcohol. Women, gambling and staying high in Vegas led me to robbing and coning my way through everything. My mother died when I was 27 and I became confused and hurt. I knew I needed help but I didn't know where to turn. Before long I was riding a freight train to Reno. I checked into the Salvation Army where I was first introduced to Jesus Christ. I began to learn what life was really about and started to look at things from a different perspective. I was baptized and began to walk according to God's plan and will for my life. Still I struggled with personal issues which I never dealt with. I began to backslide.

Before long I had gone back to drugs and alcohol. I realized I needed change so I moved to Salt Lake City. I ended up in the public shelter which blessed me with a place to stay, but I was too weak to resist the influence of those who were drinking and abusing drugs. I was spiritually bankrupt and struggled to follow through, even with good intentions. I began to have coffee and doughnuts every morning at the park and would talk to the guys that were handing out the food. They invited me to one of the morning bible study and I rededicated myself to the Lord, Jesus Christ. I was invited to spend the night at the mission and I accepted. From the first day, my relationship and desire to know what God has planned for me was ignited.

Since that day I have been steadfast in prayer, Bible study and Christian fellowship. God has consumed me and the Holy Spirit is on fire inside of me. I am learning so much here and I am very grateful for what God is doing. I want to thank God for answering my prayer when I had lost hope. I am excited everyday knowing God is in control of everything and He has opened up my heart and is renewing my mind. He has blessed me with so much that I am continually seeking Him, His love and everything He has for me to do. I can now share with others who struggle with the pitfalls of life and encourage them. I get to tell others about God's wonderful plan of salvation. It is an honor to be used by God for His glory.

Since Mark first shared his testimony a lot has happened. He has completed phase one of the Up-Word Motion Program and has moved into mentoring and encouraging many others who are where he has been. He is saving money for the future and driving ministry vehicles to transport the men in the program and distribute physical goods to those in need. He is a hard worker and faithful to help anyone he can. - May 2011