

Life Transformed By God

Bill Collins



Born in 1952, I grew up in Southern California. All through elementary school I was in a band and all of the music classes I could find. I didn't start to drink alcohol until I was 18 years old. Music was my whole life and the more involved I got in the environment of that world the more I drank and finally I was introduced to drugs.

At 23 I joined the Air Force Band, got out two years later and formed more bands. My addiction to alcohol grew more and more. Gradually the bottle was the center of my life and I didn't even know why I kept drinking, but I couldn't stop! Years passed and the drinking got worse. I got married in 1994, to a beautiful Christian woman named Kathi. She loved me very much but left me after 4 years of addictive lies and deceit.

I went to Pittsburgh to quit drinking, thinking that a change in geography would work, but I only got worse. Then I left Pennsylvania to head back to California (to where I did not know). I fell into a coma, induced by alcohol withdrawal because someone stole my bags (filled with all my alcohol) in the bus depot, in Pittsburgh. The next thing I knew I woke up in the Veterans Hospital in Salt Lake City - a place very foreign to me. I was in the hospital for a month, finding out how close I was to dying. After a month I was put on a city bus into town and now I'm homeless in a cold place that scared me to no end.

I was homeless for one day and right across the street was the Salt Lake City Mission. I saw that the Mission had coffee and I went over to get some. I was greeted at the door, very warmly, I went in to see a bible study in progress and I sat down.

After the Bible Study I was invited into the Missions' office and the instructor asked me "Would you like to join a program to learn about Jesus Christ and redirect your life?" Right then, I felt a million pounds of fear fall off of me! I made a choice, right then, to learn the Word of God, one day at a time, and try my best and see where the Lord would take me. To make a long story short, it has been over 9 years since I have been convinced that the Word of God is true and Jesus took me from being a screaming drunk to a Pastor.

The calling God has for me, now, is to train up men just like me to learn the Word of God. If you would have told me I'd be a Pastor in the Salt Lake City Mission, 10 years ago, I would have called you a liar or thought you were drunk. Since the first day in the Mission the Holy Spirit has filled a hole in my heart that was only for Jesus. The Joy of the Lord is now my strength and I am very thankful that He was mindful of me.

My job is not always easy, but there is nothing else I'd rather do with my life, than to serve the homeless and teach men, right off the streets, the life changing Word of God.

"If it wasn't for Jesus Christ, I'm sure I would be dead ----- Praise our Lord Jesus" - May 2008