Choosing Life or Death

Taryn Sharp 19 November 2019



‘Many, Lord my God, are the wonders you have done, the things you planned for us. None can compare to you; were I to speak and tell of your deeds, they would be too many to declare’ (Psalm 40: 5).

Jesus made Himself known to me when I was just 7 years old. I was playing with my cousins whilst they were listening to Psalty (children’s worship music) and as I watched them dance to the music, my aunt said to me, ‘Taryn, do you want to know Jesus?’. With excitement, I said yes, as I was intrigued. My aunt led me in the ‘sinner’s prayer’ and the Holy Spirit immediately fell on me. I fell on the floor filled with love, peace & joy. Rolling and laughing on the floor that day is my fondest childhood memory – it was truth and the first real thing to happen in my little life. I held onto that moment for many years.

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I was raised in a broken home, my parents are amazing people and I love them, however they were both carrying hurts from their own childhoods when they raised me, and they were not believers. I didn’t understand or feel, love, peace, joy or security at home. I was a troubled child, struggled at school and had no friends. I was always alone and would push anyone who I thought could hurt me away, including those who would try to befriend or love me.

As I got older, I began to use drugs, which ended up with me being addicted to cocaine, ecstasy,

acid, marijuana, MDMA and cigarettes. It was never enough, there was always a hole inside of me, no matter how much I used. I started to date a DJ and got involved in the club scene. I dated him for 5 years and lived with him too. One evening we had an argument and he was in the lounge while I was weeping in the bedroom. All of a sudden, I heard a powerful voice saying, 'This is not your husband. He will not be the father of your children.' I immediately got up, filled with a fear of the Lord, knowing it was Jesus speaking. I made the decision to end the relationship and moved out the very next day.

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I met Richard, my faithful husband, about one year later at a house party. We were using drugs and partying together, that is until one night Richard took too much LSD and went into an LSD psychosis, which went on for about 12 hours. Just when I thought he was mentally 'gone', he looked at me completely sober and his first words were, 'Do you have a Bible?' I said, 'YES!' and later found out that Jesus had miraculously met with him whilst he was in the psychosis. We visited Joshua Generation Church (JoshGen) for the first time that Sunday evening, where he gave his life to Jesus and I recommitted mine.

That's when it all really started. A few days after our first visit to Joshua Generation Church, God told me to stop smoking marijuana and leave the drugs in my past. Because I quit drugs so suddenly, after abusing them for years, I ended up mentally ill. I developed depression, anxiety and severe bipolar. I was in and out of clinics and gained about 40kgs in just a few months. My husband supported me all the way, and my church community continued to be there for me, always visiting me. A new picture of family was instilled in me; a healthy one.

At that time, my relationship with God was not great as I was mostly focused on my own sickness and my own pain. In those days, I was tormented and I couldn't control my own thoughts. I was riddled with pain and diagnosed with fibromyalgia. I had 3 episodes of pulmonary embolisms (blood clots in the lungs and body), meaning I had to be on blood thinning medication for the rest of my life. The doctor said I would die if I did not take the medication, even though my body reacted so badly to it. She also said that I would not be able to have children, and if I did, I would end up dying due to my condition. This was compounded by me having severe Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome and cancer cells removed from my uterus.
But God...

> **Soon things began to change in me... I would get up and choose to go against my flesh by seeking God in the secret place.**

We started to walk very closely with our community leaders, and they showed us a beautiful picture of accountability. We lived near to them and they had an ‘open door policy’, so I would walk there almost every day. I needed a place to see a godly, ‘ordered life’ and I saw so much of God in my community leader, Tanya, that I knew I wanted that for my own life. Looking back, I know God gave me a choice: life or death. I chose life and Jesus. Soon things began to change in me. When Richard went off to work in the mornings, I would get up and choose to go against my flesh by seeking God in the secret place. The Holy Spirit started to teach me how to fight, how to overcome my own mind. I would put on worship in the mornings, before anything else. I learned to turn the worship I was singing into a prayer. I started to really read the Word and I finally got to know Jesus as my best friend. I spent hours every day (often all day) before Him, hanging on every word from Him. I began to quote and declare Scriptures out loud.

I listened to Jesus, I knew He was the truth, and He was faithful, which gave me faith to trust Him with my health. I was healed from fibromyalgia, pulmonary embolisms and clots, and I am still free today.God is gracious and kind; He dealt with me so gently. God gave me incredible wisdom and a strategy to decrease my mental health medication over time. It took two years, but He guided and healed me. I have been off all medication for over a year and a half now, and I finally have joy, peace, rest and a hope for the future. I am free, He delivered me, He saved me.

> **I was healed from fibromyalgia, pulmonary embolisms and clots, and…there is no sign of my ever having had Polycystic OvarianSyndrome**

I recently went to my gynaecologist for a check-up, as Richard and I have always wanted to have children. Her report was a miracle: there is no sign of my ever having had Polycystic OvarianSyndrome or any sign of the scars where they removed the cancer cells from my uterus, and she said we should have no problems conceiving!

For whatever God has planned for our future, I can rest in knowing that He has it in His hands. My faith and hope lie in knowing that He will always do what’s best for me. 2 Corinthians 4 v 18 says, ‘So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary but what is unseen is eternal.’

I am so expectant for the future, whatever it is that He has called us to. This is my testimony and it is only the beginning. ‘It’s my joy to lose my life and find it in Jesus Christ.’ (Lindy Conant, Obedience)