

## **My Testimony by Gillian Dickenson:**

I first heard the gospel at the age of 23 whilst I was doing a detox from heroin in a maternity ward for when my second child was born. As I started my detox, my children's father (we already had a two year old) was starting yet another prison sentence. During my stay in hospital I met a Christian lady there who invited me to church, and once my son was born and I was drug free, I started to attend regularly.

Having always believed in God, even though I had come from a non-Christian home and never went to Sunday school, I often talked to Him but I didn't *know* Him. Yet I was seeking Him and hungry to know Him and more importantly wanted to know what the Bible said specifically to me. I wanted to know what God wanted of me, for I had always felt sure that He wanted me to know something I didn't as yet know (if that makes sense).

Anyway, the church was a Pentecostal church and none too friendly to be honest, but everything the Pastor said to do, I eagerly did. I "*asked the Lord into my heart*" I "*gave the Lord my life*" I "*asked the Lord to save me*" I "*asked the Lord to be my Lord and Saviour*" etc. and it was suggested I buy a Good News Bible, so I did (I had no idea of the truth of the A.V. at that time). Several weeks later, I had read through most of the 'New Testament' and having trusted Christ as my Saviour with all my being I was baptised. Looking back now, I realise that the Spirit of God was working in my heart as I yearned to know the Lord more and more. This brought me soon after to a crossroads.

Two events had a significant impact upon me as a baby Christian. The first was when a Christian 'comedian' came to the church. During his 'show' he happened to say that God was not a gentleman. Immediately, I recoiled inside and shouted inwardly "No! my God IS a gentleman! He is absolutely a gentleman!" I was offended that this man had slandered my God's character, and I suddenly realised as the congregation laughed that my God was different to a lot of people's there, but I was sure the One I knew was real.

Secondly, these were the days of the 'Toronto Blessing' and 'Pensacola' and soon our church held a meeting for one of these 'blessed' men. The whole thing was a farce. The speaker never opened the Bible, and stood sweating profusely and unable to speak properly. The whole evening finished with many of the congregation piled up on top of each other in the middle of the floor either laughing hysterically or lying 'slain in the spirit.'

Even though I didn't know my Bible well, I just 'knew' this was not God. My God wasn't frivolous or silly, He was powerful and holy. When I challenged this I was told various things to justify the whole debacle. Yet the Lord was at work within me and brought verses and passages to my mind that convinced me even further that this was not God. Eventually I left the church and shook the dust off my feet.

Around the same time I came across a verse that said that if I asked the Father for the Holy Spirit, He would give Him. So, I simply believed and asked – and waited expectantly. The brother of the lady I had met in hospital attended a different church and read the AV bible, which I couldn't understand at the time, and he gave me a tape of his pastor preaching. I went home, rooted out an AV bible to read along with the sermon, and put it on. As the message started to play something amazing happened! All of a sudden GOD was in my bedroom! It was so amazingly powerful the presence of

God that I couldn't hardly bear it. But it was wonderful! And although it sounds a cliché, the scales fell from my eyes and for the first time I could SEE clearly. Spiritually! I remember just sitting there saying "Wow! There REALLY IS a GOD! You really are REAL!" I suppose in a lesser sense it was Job 42:5 "*I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee.*" I can't say I had any sense of overburdening sin, the only real sense I had was of TRUTH. THIS was the TRUTH. There was certain things I knew that night that I hadn't known before; I knew that if I fully gave my life to the Lord I would suffer; I knew that two 'Christian' friends of mine were not saved and I remember weeping desperately for them and pleading with God to save them; I knew that something terrible was coming on the earth but didn't exactly know what; and I knew Jesus was my greatest friend. In the midst of this the Lord seemed to ask me if I was 'ready'? I said "*Yes, Lord, I'm ready, ready to live for you.*"

Then a most incredible thing happened. I picked the Bible up and it became ALIVE in my hands. It was a LIVING thing! Full of life and power! In fact it was so powerful that each time I read a few verses I dropped to my knees. This went on for several days until it finally vanished away, but during those days I showed everyone who would look all the things it said and I understood every word. Now the evolutionists for all their dreams and desires can never cause life to come from non-life, but God took those dead, still, inanimate pages and made them LIVE in my very hands.

Since then, my dear, sweet Saviour has changed my life completely. I could go into what it was like before but suffice to say it wasn't good or godly. My education finished at age 13 when I was expelled from my second school, but I now have a first class honours degree; my criminal record was appalling, but I now work for social services; my children were starting their lives in complete degradation and deprivation but are now wonderful hard working young men. When their father was released from prison, as we were not married, I believe the Lord told me not to have him back. I struggled with that, but God is all wise and today this poor man has rejected the gospel for 20 years and is still a heroin addict on death's door, whom we have almost no contact with.

The Lord has placed me in different ministries over the years; street ministries, homeless ministries, even car boot sale ministries, but all with the focus on taking the gospel to a lost and dying world. At present, now my children are grown, I am praying about overseas missionary work, but I will, by His grace, do whatever and go wherever He wills.

My God has indeed taken the last twenty years and done an incredible work within me. I am still a sinner, but I always say to the Lord "*Father, I am a wretch, but I love you*".

My heart is full of thanks to Jesus Christ, my altogether lovely Saviour, for loving me and saving me, and for leading me by His Holy Spirit."

May God be praised for ever and ever, until we meet Him in the sweet by and by "*For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.*" Heb. 13:14

Amen.

Your servant and sister in Christ,

Gillian



Me last year



Me in Haworth 2014



Me and my boys 2014



Me and my boys 2014