

My Walk and Sometimes Crawl With The Lord

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JAMES 5:16

Confess your faults (sins) one to another, and pray one for another, that you may be healed...

Some of the things I'm about to share my parents don't even know about, at least not until they read this, but I feel that it is something I need to share and I hope that it will be able to minister to someone.

Unlike so many other people in the world I was blessed with wonderful parents and a wonderful childhood. I have no bad memories of growing up, except for the loss of loved ones and pets, which is to be expected. I grew up a PK (Preacher's Kid) and although some PK's can be the wildest kids growing up I was not one of them. However my wildness would come later in college.

When your father is a preacher, you basically grow up in church. I got saved and was baptized around the age of eight. Like most Christians that get saved at a young age my spiritual growth was not much. I would go to Sunday school and learn all the wonderful stories of the Bible, but I never read the Bible outside of church, after all I was a kid and was more concerned about playing than reading my Bible. When your only contact with the Lord is in church your spiritual growth will not be that much.

I would say that my spiritual growth and walk with the Lord, stayed at a relatively slow pace until around my 17th birthday. I had gone to a church camp and ended up being filled with the Holy Spirit. I believe that I took big steps forward in my spiritual growth and walk with the Lord that week. Every day we would have several Bible Study classes and two Worship Services. Even during my free time I found myself reading my Bible. After I got back home I continued to read my Bible and was really starting to pay more attention to the sermons when I was in church where as before I often found myself daydreaming. When your contact with the Lord is on a daily basis you will see and feel a spiritual growth in your life.

Eventually my spiritual growth and walk with the Lord would become a crawl. I had started college and found myself not reading my Bible as much as I had been. I was going to classes and labs from 8:00 a.m. to about 4:00 p.m. Then I was going to work from 4:30 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. After work I would have to do as much homework as I could and then be back in class by 8:00 a.m. There just didn't seem to be enough time for me to read my Bible. After my first year of college I got a roommate and this is when my crawl began to head off of the path. I started going to parties with my roommate and eventually I found myself becoming a social drinker. I would drink one or two beers and eventually I got to where I would drink mixed drinks. Eventually my social drinking would become an everyday thing. We had our own little liquor store in our cabinet above the stove in our apartment. Pretty much everything you could think of to make mixed drinks. We bought a Bartending for Dummies book and started at the beginning and were working our way to the end trying all of the different drink combinations. I would justify it in my mind because I never drank enough to get drunk, but in my heart the Holy Spirit was convicting me. Eventually I started going with my roommate to the local bar and occasionally would go to the city to strip clubs. I never could justify the strip clubs in my mind and although I did have fun while I was there, not long after we left the guilt would start flooding my heart. I started skipping church more often claiming that I was

tired from school and work, which was often the case, but a lot of the time it was because I was feeling too guilty to go. Something else that happened to me during this time is I began cussing. I was working the night shift and was surrounded by co-workers who were quite fluent in the language of cursing. Before I knew it I was cussing with the best of them. Luckily I never took the Lord's name in vain but I was still convicted by the Holy Spirit. As you can probably guess my spiritual growth and walk with the Lord during my college years was non-existent. In fact you could say that my walk became a crawl and then become a back slide. Even though my roommate moved out after my junior year of college I still continued to occasionally drink during my senior year making my way through the rest of our bartending book. Eventually though towards the end of my senior year with the help of the Holy Spirit convicting my heart I had had enough of living a double life. I poured my stock of liquor down the drain and threw away the bartending book. I began making my way back to the path of the Lord. After graduation I was able to start working the day shift and was able to take a desk job in the office thus removing me from the environment of cursing that I had grown accustomed to. I recommitted my life to Christ and began once again walking with the Lord.

Even though I had begun walking with the Lord once again my spiritual growth was slow. I had not begun to read my Bible again. My only contact with the Lord was when I went to church. Eventually I met a girl, fell in love and got married. My spiritual growth and walk with the Lord continued to be slow for a while, but before long it began to become a crawl. My wife had started working on Sundays so I found myself not going to church because she wasn't able to. Another reason I feel that it became a crawl is that I had begun putting my wife first in my life rather than God. Sadly a couple of months ago the woman I thought I would grow old with decided she no longer wanted to grow old with me. As you can imagine I was devastated. I had two options, blame and curse God, or draw close to him. I chose to draw close to him and have been blessed since. He has provided for my needs and has comforted my heart. I have begun reading my Bible everyday and also I have begun doing a lot more praying. I find myself eager to be at church and have joined C.M.A. (Christian Motorcyclists Association) so that I will have more opportunities to serve him. I feel like I have once again taken big steps in my spiritual growth and walk with the Lord. When my wife first left me I asked God, why Lord? Even though I still don't know the answer I know that there is a purpose for everything and that all things work together for good to those who love Him, and are called to his purpose. (*Romans 8:28*) I feel that perhaps I am going through this so that I can relate to and help others who also will have to go through this. To be able to show them that even in the midst of tragedy you can experience spiritual growth and a walk with the Lord.

Now you may be asking yourselves, why is he writing this? Well here is the answer. My CMA Chapter President asked us to write a short paragraph about our Testimony for our Chapter newsletter. I have always felt that since I grew up in a good home and in church and was saved at an early age that I did not have a testimony. However, after thinking about it, I do. It's just a different type of testimony. My testimony is about how God's love is unchanging. Even though I stumbled and fell in my walk with the Lord, His love for me did not change, falter, or diminish. He still loved me just as much as he did the day he died on the cross for my sins and it will always be that way. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. (*Hebrews 13:8*)

In closing I would just like to say that God loves you that much too, rather you are not yet a Christian, or if you are a Christian, but are crawling or off of the path as I was at one point in my life. No matter what we have done, God still loves us. In fact God loved everyone on the earth enough to send his only son to be the payment for our sins and Jesus loved us enough to be that payment. No matter what your background is, God loves you and is waiting for you to accept his gift of salvation and ready to walk with you through all the trails of this world. If you have not yet been saved I would encourage you to get saved, if you are a new Christian that is still finding yourself sinning from time to time don't be discouraged know that God will forgive you I encourage you to repent and confess you sins to him and draw close to Him so that the Holy Spirit will help keep you from sinning, and if you are saved but have backslidden I would encourage you to repent and recommit your life to Christ and do what you can to show others the love of God. Thank you for taking the time to read this and May God Bless You!!!

