

BROOKE'S STORY

Sometimes you have to hit bottom before you look up. This was certainly the case in my life. Hanging with the wrong crowd in high school led me down a path of destructive choices which ultimately landed me in prison.

I remember that first night in prison, when the steel doors closed behind me — I felt so very, very alone. And I wondered, “How did I end up here? How did my life turn out this way? This was not the way my life was supposed to be. I had such big dreams, and now they are all shattered.” I was at rock bottom and I was scared. I lost all hope. You see, I attended church regularly as a child. And I was happy and contented through Junior High. However, my life began to spiral downhill in High School. During those years, my parents went through a very painful divorce. While trying to deal with the breakup of my family, I also felt rejected by some of my best friends. It seems petty to me now, but it was a big deal at that time in my life. However, I still hadn't hit bottom yet.

I turned my back on my family and friends, and began hanging out with a new group of friends who accepted me. I also turned my back on God. I began smoking and drinking, and once those boundaries were down, I then began to experiment with drugs as well. I was numbing the pain in my life with chemicals.

I wanted to be loved, protected and cherished. And in the years that followed, in my dysfunction, I ran into the arms of several different men. However, none of them satisfied the longing in my heart. I had given birth to twin boys in one relationship, but due to my use of drugs and alcohol, I lost custody of my sons. This was so painful, but I still wasn't at the bottom yet.

In the next relationship, I had a baby girl, and not surprisingly, the marriage failed. I soon got addicted to meth-amphetamines. I deceived myself into thinking that I was fine, but I was spiritually and emotionally bankrupt. The spiral continued, but I still was not at rock bottom.

I then began selling drugs to support my habit. Meanwhile, longing to fill the emptiness in my soul, I met another man and became pregnant with my 4th child. Unbeknownst to me, Federal Drug Agents were following me, and I was arrested, taken into custody and placed in solitary confinement. I was told that I was facing a life sentence. It was then, pregnant and hopeless, I finally hit rock bottom.

Lightning didn't strike, but my eyes were opened nonetheless. In the confines of that prison cell God reached out to me. As I looked around that cell, struggling with the reality of what my life had become, I saw the words “Trust in **JESUS**” written on the wall. Instantly I knew those words were meant for me. I gave my life to Jesus that day in the prison cell. Like so many others, desperate and in need of a savior, I knew I needed help. Jesus saved me that day and my life has not been the same since.

Miraculously, I was given probation and not a life sentence. And just as miraculously, I was delivered from my dependence upon drugs and alcohol. And best of all, God has restored by relationship with my four children. Jesus is real & I love & serve Him now. Thank you Mel. I am praying your Arsenal Prayer daily. Lord bless you all.