

TESTIMONY OF KIM HODGES

In 1972, I was in the 8th grade and got high for the first time. It does not even matter what the drug was, but what does matter is that it set a pattern for 30 years of drug use. What started out as recreational rebellion turned into a lifetime of not being prepared to handle life's ups and downs in a healthy manner. I set myself on a one-way path of self-destruction that I could rationalize as, "I am only hurting myself." What I was now, was a drug addict in training.

My drug use, by way of alcohol, led me to use marijuana, heroin, L.S.D., cocaine, P.C.P., Quaaludes, speed of all varieties and forms, and pharmaceuticals with a little roman numeral behind it in the P.D.R., which indicates "narcotic."

So when my life started spiraling out of control, the death of a very close nephew, the breakup of my 20 year marriage, the sudden death of my Mother, and then my daughter moved away, well, let's just say I was less than equipped to deal with so many losses (in about a year's time). Then I was in a terrible car crash, which left me helpless and hopeless for about a year. Drugs numbed the headaches and the physical pain and I started to abuse drugs as never before in my life. Up until this point in time, I was a good wife, Mom, homemaker, and had a great job building a franchise for a "Fortune 500" company. Now I know that if I had centered my free time on Godly, healthy things, instead of drugs I would have been fine. But all those years of drug use turned into a crutch, then into abuse, and finally addiction. I finally entered rehab. I got tired of being tired of being tired.

I went through a 90 day program and was so relieved when Pastor Chris asked me if I was going to stay for the Dove Foundation Program as 90 days was not enough for me. The Dove Foundation is a one year Bible School/Discipleship program that has not only taught me in-depth Bible study, but also a profound insight to me and my identity in Christ. I graduated the Dove program in March 2008 and God put on my heart to commit to the Ministry School. It is an opportunity to research and write a thousand word essay each week for six months on topics that Pastor Chris has chosen. I am learning so much about God and life that when I do leave here it will be with the ability to live a healthy life with God at the center of life instead of me.

When I was six years old, my Mother dedicated me to God. I was baptized and later I understood it, but never lived it, even though I believed it. I am fifty years old now and God has shown me how to live with Him in control. According to God's plan I am totally forgiven. According to God's plan I am an overcomer. To tell anyone and everyone that will listen about the love of Jesus Christ. To tell anyone and everyone that will listen what real freedom is in Jesus. I cannot say that I will never stumble but by God's grace and mercy I will never go back to that spiritual wasteland that I was in before. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13