

50 Years Ago Today, Jesus Transformed a Drug Addict Into a World Changer

It was 50 years ago today that Jesus saved me from my sins. Fifty years!

I am beyond amazed that I can even write these words. Lord, You are so good!

It was 50 years ago today that, after weeks of spiritual wrestling and deep conviction of sin, I encountered His love so deeply that I said, "I will never put a needle in my arm again." And the rest, as they say, is history.

And what an amazing history it has been. I cannot help but stop and give God praise. And I truly believe that the best is yet to come. Truly!

Thank You, thank You, Lord!

I have shared the details of my personal testimony countless times in many forms and formats. But today, celebrating 50 years as a believer, I want to celebrate what He has done over the decades, publicly and specifically, declaring the depth of my gratitude to the Lord for saving a wretch like me – and I mean a wretch.

I was doing LSD at the age of 14 and shooting heroin at the age of 15.

Stealing money from my own father.

Breaking into a doctor's office with a friend, just for fun (and to steal drugs).

Full of pride and rebellion, with an ugly, wicked temper too.

Utterly lost in sin.

And yet by God's amazing grace – and I mean amazing – in these last 50 years, I have had the privilege of:

- Preaching the gospel thousands of times all over America and around the world.
- Taking the message of Jesus across the globe, including almost 200 ministry trips outside the USA to more than 30 nations (with more than 50 trips to Asia alone).
- Writing more than 40 books and over 2,000 articles and op-eds.
- Serving as a leader in what has been called the longest running, local-church revival in American history.
- Leading many Jewish people to Yeshua through our outreach materials in English, Hebrew, Russian and more.
- Enjoying more than 45 years of marriage to my wonderful bride Nancy, herself a former Jewish atheist, now the mother of our two wonderful children and grandmother of our four amazing grandchildren. (And a shout-out to our terrific sons-in-law too!)

What a testimony to the grace and mercy of the Lord. Any good that has come out of my life is to His glory alone. For that, I am eternally grateful. All praise and honor goes to Him!

Just think.

This same person who used to huff diesel gas to get high earned a Ph.D. in Near Eastern Languages and Literatures from New York University and has delivered scholarly papers at venues like Harvard University, conducted debates or delivered outreach lectures at venues like Oxford University, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Yale University and Ohio State University, and contributed to some of the finest academic works in print. That is what you call transforming grace!

I can assure you that when I was shooting heroin into my veins and listening to Led Zeppelin's "Dazed and Confused,"

conducting lectures on university campuses was not on my radar at all.

My life goals used to be getting high and playing drums with my rock band, and I didn't have the slightest thought of serious study or academic work. Yet the Lord has now given me the privilege of serving as an adjunct or visiting professor at seven leading seminaries and training thousands of students in our ministry schools. It was the man once known as "Drug Bear" and "Iron Man" who helped train them!

Only the Lord can take credit for that. Only God can get the glory for taking someone so worthless and making his life count. And He can do the same for you or someone you love who is hopelessly lost today. I am living proof. Jesus can completely turn you around.

I know the depth of my own sin outside of the Lord's goodness. I know how vile and depraved I could have been. And I know the incredible amount of mercy the Lord has shown me over these 50 years as a believer. Mercy indeed!

I am a perfect example of God using something foolish and weak to confound the wise and strong. That's why my only boast is in Him. And that's why I am humbled to the point of tears of gratitude. How I love the Lord!

And so, in celebration of 50 years in Him, may I ask you for two small favors?

First, if our ministry has been a blessing to you or played a significant role in your life, would you please take a moment and share some of those details with us? This will allow us to praise Him even more and bring encouragement to our whole ministry team. (You can send your story to us as info@.)

Second, please pray with us that the Lord will enable us to blanket the nation with the Line of Fire broadcast. We feel a holy mandate to see exponential expansion in 2022 but we can

only do this with supernatural help, favor, wisdom and provision. Please join us in prayer for this.

And to all of you who have prayed for me and my family and our ministry over the years and supported us in so many different ways, thank you, thank you, thank you. And a special thanks on this day to those of you who are still alive who helped pray me into the kingdom back in 1971 when I was just 16 years old. Your prayers were not in vain!

Thank You, thank You, Lord!

Lord, on that glorious night of December 17, 1971, I would never have dreamed in a million years what You had in store for me in the decades that would follow. And so, today, overwhelmed with gratitude, wonder and awe, I wholeheartedly consecrate the rest of my days to You – whatever the cost or consequence, whether by life or by death.

You are worthy of it all! {eo}

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