

'When He Came Into My Jail Cell, I Found Peace'

I have always marveled at the freeing story of Bill Wilson, the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous, from alcoholism.

At the end of his rope, hopelessly enslaved to alcohol, but with a glimmer of possible hope coming from the Oxford Christian movement, he checked into Towns Hospital in New York. Wilson was mildly interested in the Oxford group but resisted the kind of demands surrender to God would put on him.

He had one last bottle of beer on his way to the hospital. It was Dec. 11, 1934, when he checked in.

Feeling incredibly hopeless, he wondered if reaching for God might be the answer. It was the thing he had not tried. Desperately, he cried out to God in his hospital room, saying, "If you're real, show yourself."

A biographer of Wilson, Francis Hartigan, wrote in his book, *Bill W.: A Biography of Alcoholics Anonymous Co-Founder Bill Wilson*, that "the room suddenly filled with light. It was bright and white, a benign, enveloping presence that seemed more than a match for the terror he had been feeling just moments before."

Hartigan describes Wilson feeling like he was on a mountaintop with wind blowing toward him, then through him. After this experience with the wind and the light, he felt incredibly free. Bill Wilson lived for 36 more years and in them, never took another drink (p. 61 of *Bill W.*).

This was a profound encounter with God.

It is often a process to heal from addiction and its

devastating mental, spiritual and physical wounds, but there are those who describe being delivered instantaneously just like Wilson.

In this episode of *Rooted by the Stream*, listen to the story of Jessica Sanders, formerly a meth addict for 15 years, but now free and in ministry for the Lord. Hear how she encountered the Holy Spirit in a jail cell bringing her freedom and a brand-new life in an instant.

In these days of the pandemic, the drug problem is increasing in our nation yet again. Healing miracles occurring for people bound in addiction is such good news. {eo}