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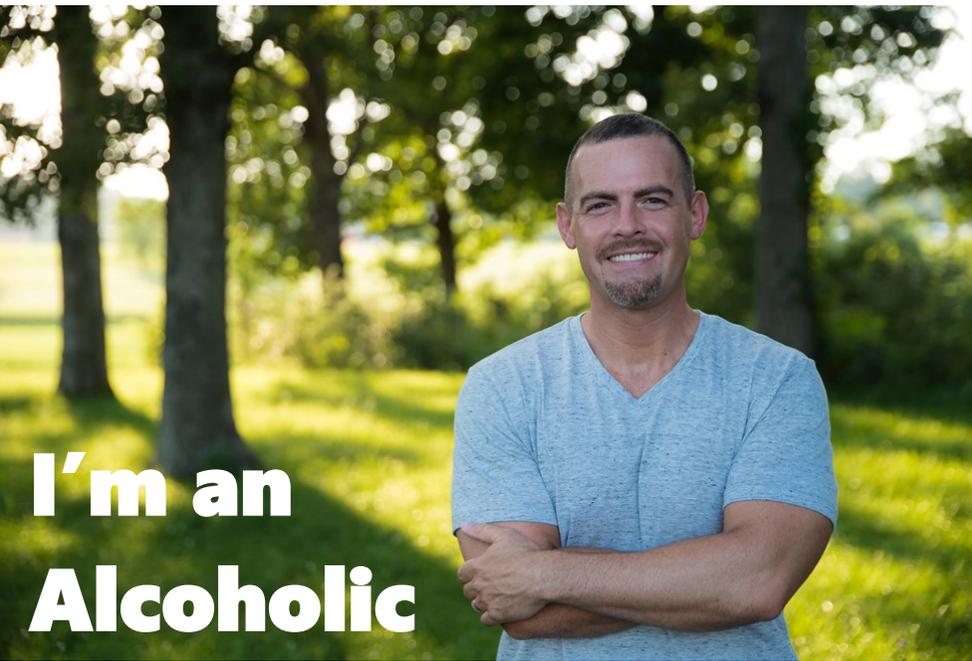


“...GO HOME TO YOUR FRIENDS, AND TELL THEM WHAT WONDERFUL THINGS THE LORD HAS DONE FOR YOU AND HOW MERCIFUL HE HAS BEEN.” MARK 5:19

Volume 13, Issue 1

Non-Denominational, Non-Church Affiliated

January 2018



I'm an Alcoholic

I've been a Christian since I was a kid, I just didn't start to show Jesus any real respect or love until about 2011.

I'm an alcoholic. For years and years I drank way too much, way too often - as a Christian. No, I didn't get "all religious" to try to stop drinking. However, I was "religious" while drinking. I would testify with a beer in my hand and not think there was anything wrong with that. And really, there is nothing wrong with alcohol, there is something wrong with ME drinking it. I can't. I don't have an "off button."

I want to say, right off the bat, that there's not anything wrong with drinking, **IF** you don't have a problem with it. If you have to constant-

ly ask yourself, "Do I have a problem," more than likely you do.

My wife can have a glass or two of wine, or a margarita, and be done. She won't even think about it anymore. Me? It's like lighting a powder keg. I want to polish off that bottle of wine, and another. Margaritas? I'll have the pitcher, and shots, oh, and some beers too. Now, I can try to fight it, but I'd be fooling myself. I always want more!

When I controlled my drinking I couldn't enjoy it, and when I enjoyed it I couldn't control it. Once I start, I'm off to the races. I'm either going to drink a ridiculous amount, then binge eat and pass out, or, be grumpy and extremely agitated if I couldn't get access to more.

I liked to drink because it relaxed

me; nothing quite likes that first beer. But then, after relaxed, I'd become overly excited! Then, I'd become the smartest man alive with "great business ideas" or become "the most handsome man in the world and every lady wanted me".... *pfft!* what an idiot. I look back now at old Matt and I want to grab him and smack him. I was only fooling one person, and that was me--unaware that I was being a puppet for the devil, digging my own grave. I was blind to the control he had over me.

"Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 1 Peter: 5:8"

We problem drinkers drink for one reason only, and if someone says otherwise they are lying. We want to feel different! If we are sad, we want to feel happy. If we are stressed, we want to feel relaxed. If we are uncomfortable, we want to feel comfortable. If we feel like a failure, we want to feel like a winner. If we are bored, we want to feel entertained. If we are already extremely excited and happy, we want to feel even more excited and happy. We are not trying to hurt people; we just want to feel different. We want to like ourselves, by getting away from who we really are.

The great news is this: Jesus teaches you who you really are sober, and you are very special. Sober you can unlock your full potential. Sober you can reach your highest

goals; love others and love yourself on the deepest level you've ever known. Sober you can finally understand just how amazing and dearly loved you are by God, our creator.

This only begins when we finally face the truth about our lives. Truth is good for us. As drinkers, we don't like the truth. We don't want to face it. We want to shove everything down deep, and cover it up with a buzz. However, Jesus says, "Give it to me." He can take what "makes" you want to drink, and use it to transform you into a great person of God and bring glory to Him.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30

The devil wants the opposite to happen. He is a liar and wants you to think that you don't have a problem and everyone else does. "Oh just have a few, you've not drank in a couple days, you're fine. Relax, enjoy yourself. You deserve it. You don't want people to think you have a drinking problem do you? So drink!"

For me, even as a successful business owner, I was a closet drunk. I hid it well, or so I thought. I used the excuse of "I can do whatever I want! It's legal! Back off! I'm free to drink." Yeah, I was "free" to drink, but I wasn't free **not** to drink.

The Good News Just Keeps Coming is a monthly, free, reader publication of positive and uplifting stories submitted by local citizens showing God's works and wonders. With the help of advertising sponsors, it is able to distribute **17,000+ copies** throughout 40+ towns and cities in several areas in Texas and beyond.

Please prayerfully consider sharing your blessings with our readers today at 979-877-0911 or at www.thegoodnewsjustkeepscoming.net!

A cheerful heart is good medicine

Proverbs 17:22



A porter loaded down with suitcases followed the couple to the airline check-in counter.

As they approached the line, the husband glanced at the pile of luggage and said to the wife, "Why didn't you bring the piano, too?"

"Are you trying to be funny?" she replied.

"No, I really wish you had," he sighed. "I left the tickets on it."

Long ago, on New York's lower east side, Mrs. Spinelli and Mrs. Goldberg were bragging about their respective abilities to overfeed dinner guests.

With evident pride Mrs. Spinelli says, "When they walk home from my house, they're all doubled-over."

Without a beat, Mrs. Goldberg answers, "From your house they can walk?"

A man goes into an ice cream parlor and says, "I'd like two scoops of chocolate ice cream, please."

The girl behind the counter says, "I'm very sorry, sir, but our delivery truck broke down this morning. We're out of chocolate."

"In that case," the man says, "I'll have two scoops of chocolate ice cream."

"You don't understand, sir," the girl says. "We have no chocolate."

"Then just give me some chocolate," he says.

Getting angrier by the second, the girl says, "Sir, will you spell VAN, as in vanilla?"

The man says, "V-A-N."

"Now spell STRAW, as in strawberry."

"OK. S-T-R-A-W."

"Now," the girl says, "spell STINK, as in chocolate."

The man hesitates. Then he says, "There is no stink in chocolate."

"THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN TRYING TO TELL YOU!" she screams

While sports fishing off Melbourne Beach, a tourist capsized his boat. He could swim, but his fear of alligators kept him clinging to the overturned craft.

Spotting an old beachcomber standing on the shore, the tourist shouted, "Are there any gators around here?!"

"Naw," the man hollered back, "they ain't been around for years!"

"Feeling safe, the tourist started swimming leisurely toward the shore. About halfway there he asked the guy, "How'd you get rid of the gators?"

"We didn't do nothin'," the beach bum said.

"The sharks got 'em."

A new business was opening and one of the owner's friends wanted to send him flowers for the occasion. They arrived at the new business site and the owner read the card, "Rest in Peace."

The owner was angry and called the florist to complain.

After he had told the florist of the obvious mistake and how angry he was, the florist replied,

"Sir, I'm really sorry for the mistake, but rather than getting angry, you should imagine this, 'Somewhere there is a funeral taking place today, and they have flowers with a note saying, 'Congratulations on your new location.'"

Mr. Norton was in the hospital recovering from an operation when the nurse on duty received a call from a man who asked how Mr. Norton was doing.

"Oh, quite well. We expect he'll be released in the morning."

"Very good, thank you."

"May I ask who is calling so that I can tell Mr. Norton?" inquired the nurse.

"This IS Mr. Norton. The doctors don't tell me anything!"

"If you'll make the toast and pour the juice, sweetheart," said Tracy the newlywed bride, "breakfast will be ready."

"Good, what are we having for breakfast," said Scott the new husband.

"Toast and juice," Tracy replied.

Bob had this problem of getting up late in the morning and was always late for work.

After a few weeks of this, his boss was mad and threatened to fire him if he didn't do something about it.

So Bob went to his doctor, who gave him a pill and told him to take it before he went to bed. He got a great night's sleep and actually beat the alarm in the morning. After a leisurely breakfast, he cheerfully drove to work.

"Boss," he said, "The pill my doctor subscribed me actually worked!"

"That's all fine," said the boss, "But where were you yesterday?"

A lady lost her handbag at the mall. An honest young lad found it and returned it to her.

Looking in her purse, she said, "Hmm, that's funny. When I lost my bag, there was a \$20 bill in it. Now there are twenty \$1 bills."

The boy replied, "That IS funny. The last time I found a lady's purse, she didn't have any change for a reward."

Part of my job as a 911 dispatcher is to interrogate callers who are in various states of panic so I can send the appropriate emergency equipment.

One day a woman called to say that a family member had fallen and needed to go to a hospital.

After finding out where she lived and assuring her that the paramedics would arrive shortly, I asked her, "Do you know what caused the fall?"

"No," the woman nervously replied. "What?"

A young businessman had just started his own firm. He had just rented a beautiful office and had it furnished with antiques.

Sitting there, he saw a man come into the outer office. Wishing to appear the hot shot, the businessman picked up the phone and started to pretend he had a big deal working.

He threw huge figures around and made giant commitments. Finally he hung up and asked the visitor, "Can I help you?"

"Yeah, I've come to activate your phone lines."

A Texan farmer goes to Australia for a vacation. There he meets an Aussie farmer and gets talking.

The Aussie shows off his big wheat field and the Texan says, "Oh! We have wheat fields that are at least twice as large."

Then they walk around the ranch a little, and the Aussie shows off his herd of cattle. The Texan immediately says, "We have longhorns that are at least twice as large as your cows."

The conversation has, meanwhile, almost died when the Texan sees a group of kangaroos hopping through the field. He asks, "And what are those?"

The Aussie replies with an incredulous look, "Don't you have any grasshoppers in Texas?"

Two gas company servicemen, a senior training supervisor and a young trainee, were out checking meters in a suburban neighborhood.

They parked their truck the end of the alley and worked their way to the other end. At the last house, a woman looking out her kitchen window watched the two men as they checked her gas meter.

Finishing the meter check, the senior supervisor challenged his younger co-worker to a foot race down the alley back to the truck to prove that an older guy could outrun a younger one.

As they came running up to the truck, they realized the lady from that last house was huffing and puffing right behind them. They stopped and asked her what was wrong.

Gasping for breath, she replied, "When I saw two men from the gas company running as hard as you two were, I figured I'd better run too!"

I would try to "cut back," or only drink on a certain day (that never lasted, it's all I thought about), or, only drink on Friday (but then Saturday came, and I had left over beer, so I had to drink that). Sunday, I was usually too hung over to move, and then Monday rolled around, "I've already drank 3 days in a row; why not go have some drinks after work."

I was a slave. I tried "quitting" hundreds of times, and all of them were short-lived. Eventually I just stopped trying to quit, and said, "I drink. It's just who I am. Nothing I can do about it." What lies!

Then one day as I was begging God, "Please, just take this desire away from me." God is not a magic genie - He is sovereign God, who loves us. I felt something down deep, in my heart telling me I had to face myself. I did and it hurt a lot. It finally made sense. I knew that the only way I would not just quit, but begin, would be to face whatever feelings I kept drinking away; the very feelings that Jesus wanted me to face, with Him and through Him. But I had to feel them in order to grow towards Him and truly feel His love.

It has been almost 7 years without a drop and I feel good. Actually, that's probably the biggest understatement of the year for me. One of my gifts is writing, but I can't even come up with an adjective to describe how really good I feel. You just have to feel it to understand it. I have so much energy,



Matt McMillen has maintained his sobriety for the past 7 years.

so much I don't even know what to do with it sometimes. It's amazing!

So if this is you in the bondage of an addiction, in chains, in slavery, my friend, I'm here to tell you today that there is hope! This "hope," that I speak of is found in drawing near to Jesus; by getting to know Him, studying Him and praising Him. This hope is found in taking on His characteristics, His words, His power, and mostly His love. The Bible says in 1 John that "God Is Love," and Jesus personified God. When you get to know Jesus, you get to know your Creator. When you get to know Him you get to see real love in action. He has a better plan for you, and it does not include your addiction. Give it all to Jesus. Say, "Here, take me, I'm yours." You must stop trying to quit. **You** cannot quit! Quitting requires **your** power, beginning requires God's power. You can do it through Christ. Freedom waits. Break free. Begin.

*Matt McMillen
Farmington, Missouri*



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HUGS From Heaven

My reason for starting the prison ministry in 2011 was to find a place to send the old papers that we picked up each month, so hopefully each paper would be a blessing to someone and not just be recycled. I never dreamed God had a plan to bless my life more than I could ever be a blessing to anyone else.

What a joy it is to get notes and letters from our readers, but especially those that are incarcerated. Over time I have become pen pals with several inmates and they have become like my extended family. I look forward to hearing from each of them.

Last month I received the sweetest card from a lady in prison that had finished serving her sentence and was so excited to be going home for Christmas and being with her children again. She thanked the ministry for sending her positive good news and constantly reminding her and the other ladies there, how much God loved them and cared for them. She told me it was **The Good News Just Keeps Coming** that kept her going during some difficult times and that deeply touched my heart.

Within the next week, I got four newsletters returned unopened from inmates in four different facilities,

marked in big letters on the front **RE-LEASED!!** Even though I've never met these children of God and may never see them until we all get to heaven, I was overjoyed and celebrated in my heart for their returning home to their families. I felt like I had been given several big hugs and then I realized they were all Hugs from Heaven! As I continued to think about these happy folks, this scripture verse came to my heart.

³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?'"

³⁸ "When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you?"

⁴⁰ "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" *Matthew 25:37-40 (NIV)*

Rejoicing over the good news of my new friends really made my month. God does have creative ways of sending us each a hug, just when we need it most.

*In His Love,
Diana Boring
San Felipe, Texas*

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Do Unto Others

This evening as I was leaving Best Buy, I noticed this man going through the garbage can outside of the store. As I walked to my car I watched him as he reached in the garbage can and pulled out fast food trash bags and inspected all that was in the thrown away bags. He did this for several minutes. He would find a few fries in one bag and a bite or two of a hamburger in another bag. You can see the hamburger wrapper by his knee where he was placing the food items he'd found.

He never bothered anyone or tried to stop and beg for money as people entered and left the store. After he went through the entire trash can he neatly cleaned up the area and wrapped up the food he found in the dirty hamburger wrapper. My heart literally hurt for him. I am not someone who just hands out money or even helps homeless people because so many are not truly homeless. I don't guess I've ever seen someone actually go through a garbage can to try to find food to eat.

I knew I had to help him. I got out of my car and asked him if I could buy him something to eat. He told me he would appreciate anything I could get him. He was on a bike and I told him if he'd follow me I'd buy him a meal at the fast food place around the block. He followed me and I bought him the biggest meal they had on the menu. The only request he gave me for his order was if I could get him a big

glass of sweet tea to go with his meal! When I brought him his food, he was so thankful. He told me his name was Steve and he'd been homeless ever since his sister died last September. He was trying to get off the streets, but it was so hard. I told him God loved him and I would pray for him. He told me again how much he appreciated the meal.

When I got back in my car, I drove off with such a heaviness in my heart for this man. I drove down the road and felt compelled to go back to help this man. When I came back he had finished his meal and was riding away. I pulled up beside him and asked him if there was any way I could help him. He told me not really. He never asked me for money. I asked him if I could buy him a few meals and put it on a gift card for him. He told me that would be so kind. I drove to McDonalds and bought him some meals and gave him a gift card.

He broke down crying. He told me that he prayed for me today! I wasn't sure what he meant (I was assuming he was praying for me for what I did for him) so I thanked him. He said, "No, you don't understand. I prayed that God would send someone to buy me a hot meal today...and he sent you!" I didn't know what to say...I was speechless! Praying for a hot meal wasn't a prayer I had prayed today! Come to think of it, that's not a prayer I've ever

(OTHERS continued on page 8)



**Proverbs
3:5-6**

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Whatever you do, do it with all of your might, as working for the Lord, not for men.

Colossians 3:23



Hummingbird Cake



- 1 cup softened butter
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 Tbsp vanilla
- 4 large eggs
- 3 cups flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1/3 cup buttermilk
- 1 1/2 cups mashed ripe bananas
- 8 oz. can crushed pineapple

Beat butter, sugar and vanilla until light and fluffy. Add eggs, beating well. Stir in bananas and pineapple, don't over mix. In separate bowl mix flour, soda, cinnamon and salt. Add to butter mixture alternately with buttermilk. Pour into greased and floured 2 or 3 layer cake pan. Bake at 350 degrees, 25 to 30 minutes, or until tests done in the center. Cool in pan 15 minutes. Turn layers onto cooling racks until room temperature before frosting.

Frosting for Hummingbird Cake

- 1 cup butter, room temperature
- 2 8 oz packages cream cheese, softened
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- 2 cups powdered sugar

Beat butter and cream cheese until creamy, stir in vanilla and lemon juice. Gradually stir in powdered sugar until right consistency. Frost cooled layers. Top cake with coconut, Macadamia nuts, or pecans.

Marilyn Welch
Oakwood, Texas

From Our Mailbox



Dear The Good News Just Keeps Coming,

I have just read one of your papers and was very up lifted with everything shared in it.

I want to ask you for a subscription of the Good News paper. I am unable to pay but I pray I can get a free subscription, PLEASE!

I thank you for your time, and God bless you all.

Sincerely,
Jerry James Melancon
Pam Lychner Unit
Humble, Texas

Editor's Note: Thanks to the generous donations of so many of our readers, we are able to send Jerry and many other incarcerated people a free copy of The Good News Just Keeps Coming.

The Shepherd's Way Church

Interdenominational

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Sunday - 10 a.m. - Morning Service
10:45 a.m. - Children dismissed
for Children's Church

Tuesday - 9 a.m. - Fall & Spring
Ladies' Bible Study

Wednesday - 7 p.m. - Family Night
Pioneer Club: 4 yrs. - 3rd grade
Area 456 Club: 4th - 6th grade
Elevate: Youth; Adult Bible Study

Friday - 10 a.m. - Intercessory Prayer

Where Love Abounds

The GOOD NEWS Just Keeps Coming

FUN WITH GOD'S WORD

Use the scriptures below to find and circle the **BOLDFACED** words. **UNDERLINED WORDS** will be found together.

S	I	N	G	D	O	M	E	F	R	E	L	U	R	L	K	V	H
E	T	R	N	O	Y	B	X	E	R	W	G	L	I	A	P	C	A
E	O	Z	O	I	D	G	C	I	M	U	C	N	Z	A	I	S	P
D	S	A	W	T	E	D	E	U	D	M	I	Y	T	T	I	A	P
B	H	E	S	T	H	U	L	D	L	A	O	T	S	X	P	I	E
E	E	Y	L	P	I	T	L	U	M	N	E	U	T	N	G	T	N
A	N	S	G	H	N	I	E	S	H	R	J	H	S	R	K	N	E
R	T	U	I	M	F	G	N	N	N	P	D	L	T	H	E	Y	D
I	U	O	B	S	A	K	T	E	N	A	U	M	L	S	E	E	I
N	O	E	F	M	R	C	D	E	Y	M	J	I	R	I	D	N	S
G	H	S	I	P	E	O	P	L	E	U	A	G	P	E	E	R	L
Y	G	R	U	K	O	T	A	J	B	G	T	D	T	B	S	B	A
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M	T	M	Q	X	E	L	A	M	E	F	D	N	A	E	L	A	M

And God said, "Let us make people in our image to be like ourselves. They will be masters over all life, the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky and all the livestock, wild animals and small animals. So God created people in His own image; God patterned them after Himself; male and female, He created them. God blessed them and told them, "Multiply and fill the earth and subdue it. Be master over the fish and birds and all the animals." And God said, "I have given you the seed bearing plants through-out the earth and all the fruit trees for your food." And so it was. Then God looked over all He had made and He saw it was excellent in every way. This all happened on the sixth day.

Genesis 1:26-31

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Folding Laundry

Last night I was doing the laundry. Inexplicably, it's the folding that always seems to hold me up, so I usually put it off. I was sitting on the floor watching television and going through the repetitive motions of rolling socks, squaring up napkins, and unsuccessfully attempting to fold a fitted sheet (don't judge). While working, I was viewing terrible things happening on the news: scenes of people caught in natural catastrophes around the world, footage of countries being torn apart by violence and political strife. It was horrible to watch and left me feeling helpless: What can one person do?

So I just sat there and folded laundry. As I did, I realized how lucky I was by doing this mundane thing that a few minutes ago I would have an annoying chore. I felt a sense of deep gratefulness to have the still-warm cotton in my hands in a house I love with people and friends around who are safe. But I know that life can change in a second: It can go from humdrum to harrowing. It has happened to me before. So I know it's a privilege to be currently blessed with peace and a sense

or relative normalcy. I was always taught that if I'm fortunate to be in a position with both feet on the ground, I should use my stability to offer a hand to someone else. But sometimes I forget as I go through the checklist of everyday life.

Thanksgiving is traditionally the time for us to remember how blessed we are. As the big meal winds down and we do our chores—loading the dishwasher, cleaning the countertops, and putting away the leftovers—I'll take time to relish the concept of home—that warm place filled with the scent of roasted turkey, onions, butter and celery. How do we take a feeling of security and gratitude and share it with someone who would be relieved, if not thrilled, to be sitting in front of their TV folding socks? We all know how to do it: volunteering and donating money or supplies. But actually doing it is the key. During this celebration of plenty, it's good to remind ourselves that folding the laundry in itself is a blessing everyone deserves.

Stephen Orr
Des Moines, Iowa



Eva's Inspirations

The Fixer Upper

I came to God so broken, carrying pieces from my life,
I had heard He was the fixer upper, and He could make
everything all right.
With my head hung down I wondered if He even had time for me,
I had so many broken pieces, some I hoped He'd never see.
Down on my knees I felt so tired my soul just needed rest,
I was so grateful that I had come to God for I knew He was the best.
Suddenly I felt His peace and love as He gently reached out to me,
With His healing hands He took my broken pieces,
Even the ones I hoped He wouldn't see.
He promised me that every day in my life I'd see something new,
For He was the fixer upper and there wasn't anything He couldn't do.
He took on all my sins and gladly He began to erase them from
heaven above,
Letting me know that they were forever gone, forgotten in the
sea of love.
Walking with Him I started to see my life's broken pieces fall
into place,
I could finally look up, and I knew it was because of my Father's
loving grace.
My life was a fixer upper and I knew that it always would be,
But I'm so blessed because I know the fixer upper's taking
care of me.

Written by Eva Dimel
Inspired by God ©



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(OTHERS continued from page 5)

prayed! I always pray over my food, but I've never prayed for a meal...its expected! I've never doubted that I wouldn't be able to eat...Tears began to fill my eyes! Oh my...how blessed am I... Maybe God used me to answer this man's prayer...to let him know that He cares for Him and knows what goes going through! But, maybe God used this man to show me just how blessed I am and what I take for granted...

He said, "You see, I have cancer!" He pulled up his shirt and pointed to a huge mass that was poking out from his stomach. He said he knew it wouldn't be much longer. I asked him if he knew Jesus. He told me that he did. I asked if I could pray for him and he said that I could. We prayed right there on the sidewalk of McDonalds. Tears just poured from his eyes. He told me he knew that he was going to die and that he was ready to die. He was tired of being in pain and he would be better off dead because this was no life - living this way. I stayed and encouraged him for a few minutes trying to fight back my tears. My prayer

is that I showed him the love of Jesus today...that something I said gave him a hope.

You see, everybody has a story! I know Steve's story now...all because I felt compelled to help him...he ended up touching me today!

When I left him, I knew I had done what God wanted me to do! God put him in my path today...I know he did! I've never felt such a feeling to help someone as I did today. I was reminded again of how blessed I am! I have a vehicle that gets me from place to place, I have a roof over my head, clean clothes, money to buy a hot meal, running water, electricity, my health, a job, family, and friends! Sometimes God sends situations our way to remind us of how blessed

we are! Please remember Steve in your prayers!

Yes, I have been blessed; God's so good to me!

John Brantley
Atmore, Alabama

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"

Matthew 25:40

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