

I am very blessed that you want to take time to hear my story.

It is my hope that my story of surrender

will inspire you and others, regardless of your life circumstances,
to put your hope in our great loving heavenly father.

Blessed are all they that put their trust in him. Psalm 2:12.

I know that in my lifetime, God's angels have been watching and guarding me.

When I was young, I learned to adapt, to go into survival mode when necessary, and to be resilient.

I grew up in a home with an absent father and a single mother who was either busy working or going to college.

My life has changed abruptly many times.

The 1st time i remember, was when my mom and dad separated.

My mom sent me on a plane to live with my aunt in California at 4 years old.

My life changed again when I was brought back to my mom a year later.

Then I went to California at 8 years old, and again brought back to my mom a year later.

I don't know exactly the times, but I remember being part of fellowship of hope somewhere between 4 and 11 years old. The people and families made me feel loved and a part of something very special.

There were periods of time that I was left to fend for myself at home.

A lot of the time my brothers and I didn't have any structure or supervision.

We lived in a terrible mess of a house as no one cleaned anything.

At school I was picked on constantly. I didn't make any friends.

I was mistreated and accidentally caught on fire by my brothers. We lived in disfunction and chaos.

My life changed again at 11 years old when my mom brought me to the Baptist children's home in Kouts Indiana. I lived there for 2 years.

My little brother joined me after a year. At first, I was excited and I loved it. I was going on "a vacation" my mom told me.

I brought my string of Christmas lights to hang around my room.

I was broken hearted when my house-parents told me I couldn't hang them up.

I eventually learned that I didn't like discipline, rules, or stressed parents.

We had 2 sets of house parents over time, and about 5 or 6 siblings at any given time

I did like living in a safe christian home and having structure. We had bedtimes, meals, chores, allowance money, fun times, outings, and devotions together as a family. Eventually, I knew that's what I wanted my family life to be like at home and as an adult.

In church at the Baptist children's home, I learned that Jesus died for me. I made the decision to invite Jesus into my heart--even though I didn't know exactly what that means, except that I wouldn't be going to hell and I'd be going to heaven when I died.

I believed that God's love saved me from the penalty of my sins.

I have been blessed to absolutely know that I am saved by God's grace.

In the Baptist children's home I learned a favorite verse.

John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

I have learned since then that having Jesus in my life means living my life with the purpose of loving, forgiving, and surrendering when I'm led by God's Holy Spirit. And when I do those things, God is able to bless me beyond measure.

When I came home from the Baptist children's home, I went back to no supervision or direction.

I smoked cigarettes, drank and tried Marijuana in order to fit in and find friends.

I searched for the security I so desperately wanted from various relationships that didn't go as planned. I learned that life went easier when I gave in and let others have their way with me. I didn't understand and have the boundaries that I needed.

At 14 years old, I found my first boyfriend in high-school. I got pregnant and miscarried.

I was arrested 2x for underage drinking. Once, at 14, when I was found passed out next to a dumpster, laying in vomit. Then again when I was 19.

Also when I was about 19, I got beat up and sent to the hospital by 5 older girls in the parking lot of the city Market

Growing up, I was molested and raped multiple times, each time not knowing that it wasn't my fault.

There were many opportunities for me to end up as an addict, in prison, or dead at an early age.

I remember a time around 13 or 14 years old that I was racing on a bicycle with a train to the main st tracks. I crossed safely before the train. Afterwards I realized I could have tripped and died.

Whenever I remember that, and other close calls, I know God has had angels protecting me.

Starting at 17 years old, God blessed me with 3 kids whom each had a different father.

My kids gave me a reason to stop doing some things that were bad for me and started a life long practice of attending church.

I got married and divorced 3 times.

Initially I was happy to find a husband who was stable with a home of his own, went to church, seemed to value me, and seemed to be a good candidate for a good father to my kids.

We had 2 more kids together.

Eventually, I had 3 failed marriages.

I was let down, mistreated, and had no say about getting a divorce.

I wanted to give my kids a good home like I once had at the Baptist children's home.

It turned out to be a difficult job raising kids. I tried to be a good mom and wanted the best for them.

At one point,

I homeschooled all of them for 3 years thinking that would be the answer to unruly boys.

When my son christian was 9 years old and too much for me to handle, I surrendered him to living at the Baptist children's home. After a year, It was also too much for them to handle, as the house parents resigned and they closed the home

I sent christian back to the BCH when he was around 15 years old. I learned later that he was abused

by another older child at one point when he was there.

He ran away and continued his path towards drugs and jail.

It has been heartbreaking seeing my brothers become addicts and going to prison.

It was harder to then see

my own son Christian get addicted to using drugs and seeing him go to jail many times.

When he was in prison, I had to bear the bad news of his father passing away from type 1 diabetes.

I took Christian back every time he got out of jail and did my best to give him guidance and structure.

I was not able to fix his problems.

When my son Michael was 14 years old, and too much for me to handle, I surrendered to letting him go live with his dad.

He eventually stopped communicating with me at around 19 years old for 10 years. I'm so blessed that he has spoken to me a few times in the last couple of years.

I eventually developed a good relationship with my dad in my older years. He told me he was sorry for doing the wrong things and not being a good dad.

It was good to hear him tell me he got saved a couple years before he died.

I had prayed for him along with my other family. I felt like my prayers had something to do with his finding Jesus.

After my 1st failed marriage, I went to nursing school and studied very hard 3 years before I failed nursing school. I did everything I could, but still failed.

I decided that God must have had something different and better for me.

Jeremiah 29:11 says,

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future. "

When 2 of my children have decided to stop communicating with me, and one is in prison,

I've had to surrender them to God.

I pray for all 5 of my children every day.

After 3 divorces, I was making all of my own choices.

Now I am newly married.

I am surrendering to my marriage with Roberto and allowing him to be a leader for me.

Roberto and I met at work in a nursing home. We became friends and developed a close relationship.

We decided to become truck drivers together. We drove to Oregon and back every week. We drove semis pulling 2 trailers

up and down mountains daytime and through the night, sometimes on snowy, icy roads.

We almost crashed at least one time and I saw God's protection over us.

I have not always followed rules and God's word, but instead I trusted in my own abilities, survival skills and ambitions.

Whenever I'm not surrendering to God's word, I don't feel complete. I feel something missing--a sort of anxiety.

This has been good to think about my life and the necessity of surrendering.

In Matthew 16:24-25, Jesus Christ gives us very clear instructions on how to surrender to his loving authority:

Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

I haven't been going to church services very often in the last 3 years.

I am surrendering to seeking God's direction and being part of this community.

I'm very grateful for

1.
a good, loving heavenly Father who will accept me just how I am whenever I come to him,

and 2.
To think that people must have been praying for me throughout my life.

I believe God has allowed me to go through hard things so I'd become dependent on him. God knew what I had to go through to become the person I am today.

It is only because of God's mercy, I am able to trust him as a loving Heavenly Father, when others have failed me many times.

Though life can be hard,
I can rejoice and praise God as he will never fail me.

Philippians 1:6 KJV: Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ

It is my hope that, no matter what is going on in your life, you can absolutely trust that God will never fail you.