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Story

The story of my life and how out of a rough beginning and an even rougher

The truth is my life is beautiful today, but it hasn't always been that

way. Growing up as the youngest child, my nickname was Cinderella

household chores. And like Cinderella, my prince, Jesus Christ, arrived in

because I was always tasked with doing the dishes and other

marriage, God has been able to create something beautiful.

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Beauty for Ashes

time to transform my life.

Favorites I was born in Denver, Colorado, and grew up in a dysfunctional home with an alcoholic father, a rage-a-holic mother and three hard-to-live-

with siblings. When my mother discovered that Daddy preferred frequenting the local bar rather than working to provide for their growing family, she decided to go to work herself. My parents divorced Account when I was 11, and I was raised in large part by live-in-babysitters

who, more often than not, were pregnant, unwed mothers working in exchange for room and board. The turnover rate was high. My brother, Vic, introduced me to marijuana when I was 15. My

depressed, angry sister selected me to receive the brunt of her rage. Before mellowing out in later years, my mother — who actually was an Stories amazing woman — preferred to scream at us and hit us with the closest projectile within reach, rather than speak to us in a civilized manner. Life

was chaotic and tumultuous at best, and as an adolescent, I turned to cigarettes, alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, and boys. You name it, I tried Requests

most of it. Following my parents' example, I enjoyed a good party with lots of alcohol and would often skip class in high school to get high with my friends. Needless to say, I didn't exactly receive the 'Most Likely to Succeed' award after barely graduating high school at the age of 17.

oldest brother, Michael, flew me out to Hollywood, California, to visit him during spring break. He had started a memory improvement seminar company called the Memory Master Institute. I was so enamored with this Hollywood life that when he offered me a job, I dropped out of school and accepted it.

While attending Western State College in Gunnison, Colorado, my

Even though gainfully employed, alcohol and drugs dominated my

personal life, which was assuredly out of control and I didn't know what

to do about it. Fortunately, a friend named Marlene had been sharing

20, I surrendered my life to Jesus Christ while in Hollywood. Of all the

decisions I've ever made, I'd have to say this was the #1 best decision

Jesus became my everything. I came to know him as my Savior, my

became my reason for living, my Wisdom, my Counselor and my

but having Jesus with me every step of the way has made ALL the

Lord, my Strength, my Refuge, my Peace, my Joy and my Comforter. He

Deliverer. In short, I fell in love with Jesus. My life did not become easy,

difference. It is to Jesus that I dedicate this story because if He had not

me, I feel certain that I would be in a much worse place today, if I would

set His heart upon me, drawn me to Himself and run interference for

recreation and camp administration, I worked three summers at a

Navigator Christian camp in Colorado as a wilderness counselor. In

1985, I returned to LeTourneau to take a position as their switchboard

passive and his mother was domineering and abusive. We got married

himself. He learned to control his world and became quite adept at it by

with me from the Bible and praying for me. In April 1977, at the age of

My brother, Vic, was actually the one who prayed with me to receive Jesus. Yes, the same one who introduced me to pot as a teenager. He Requests explained to me that becoming a Christian meant more than just inviting Jesus into my life. It also meant surrendering my life to Him. Since making this great exchange, my life has never been the same.

of my entire life. No competition!

even be alive. At age 22, I transferred to LeTourneau, a private Christian college in hot and humid East Texas. After graduating in 1982 with a degree in

Requests It was then that I met David Bowser. David was a computer science and engineering major from a strict religious home in Ohio. His father was

receptionist.

the time we married.

when I was 30. Early in our 28 years of marriage, I discovered that David had learned as a child that he could not trust the adults in his Favorites world who should have loved, nurtured and cared for his young heart. Instead, the lesson he learned was that if he was going to have any protection from the assaults on his heart, he would have to protect

It saddens me that David was a control freak. We had four precious, beautiful children who were emotionally controlled and abused by him. Not that I was a perfect mother. Far from it! I was more the enforcer of all of his crazy rules and punishments. Submitting to David's

outrageousness is, beyond a shadow of a doubt, the greatest regret of my life. Wanting more than anything else to be a godly woman who Stories loved, followed and served God with all my heart, I succumbed to David's misinterpretation of the Biblical definition of submission. Because of this acceptance, I was trapped, deluded, angry and oppressed. Requests By the time my youngest daughter turned 16, my marriage had disintegrated and life had become extremely challenging. God provided

a divine appointment for me in the form of an impromptu meeting with all four of my children. I was informed that my baby girl was considering Favorites emancipating. In other words, she was thinking about going before a judge and making the case that she would be better off raising herself than being raised by her father and me. Account The other three were already grown and out of the house, and having been raised by David themselves, they were binding together in solidarity to help her, suggesting that I might want to leave their father to protect her. As if that wasn't compelling enough, they then asked me

for calling me out of that terrible prison!

whose mighty roar rings out: "FREEDOM!!!"

"How much longer are you going to put up with Dad's abuse, Mom?

two eye-openers from my own precious kids, I felt like scales fell from

my eyes and I was forced to come out of darkness and denial and face

head on the harsh reality of my life. That was the beginning of the end

of my marriage to their father. I will be forever grateful to my children

David and I divorced. My youngest was able to finish raising herself,

with the help of a circle of her closest friends, and she didn't have to go

before a judge to do it. I thank God that my children, who are all grown

today, have forgiven me, and I have forgiven myself. To their credit, all

four landed on their feet and live lives that they love today. Only by the

William Wallace in the final scene of Braveheart, I feel like a lioness,

I am on a mission to set people free from various forms of bondage. At

into my own, find my voice, and stand strong in my strength. I'm on a

mission to change the world and help set a million captives free from

61, I feel like a Colorado Columbine just beginning to blossom as I come

You know he shows all the signs of a classic abuser, right?" With those

grace of God!!! They are my Joy and my Crown! Over the course of the past three years, I met and married the man of my dreams and am becoming more and more free. Freedom was a whisper in my heart when I married David. Today, after 28 years of living under oppression, freedom has become the cry of my heart. Like

> the scourge of sex trafficking. With Jesus leading, guiding, blessing and providing, I have faith to believe that, together, we will do just that. Jesus has transformed my life over the past 41 years, and I share this story today as a tribute to Him, His goodness, His faithfulness and His redemption. I am SO THANKFUL for God's presence in my life and

> > "THANK YOU, JESUS!"

Beauty for Ashes Rags to Riches

Package: Moments

Better instead of Bitter

would like to take this opportunity to say,

Penned By: Mike McKibbin

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