

## My Witness to the Power of the Holy Spirit

December 10, 2006

On this past Easter Sunday, April 16, 2006 I lost my beloved Fiancée, Rae Ann, to a sudden and fatal Stroke. We had been engaged for 2 years and were actively shopping for houses, about to put our new life together. Now she was gone, and the future had disappeared with her.

After the initial numbness passed, the loss and grief that grew within me hit me hard, real hard. It shook me to the core of my soul and spiraled and snaked its way to every corner and muscle of my body. In its wake it left excruciating pain. A pain so deep and cold and hard that I did not know if I could live any longer, or even wanted to.

The experience felt like something had torn out my intestines and ripped my heart into two pieces. A red-hot steel rod had been driven into my forehead, separating the hemispheres of my brain. Both my arms had been torn from their sockets. An inhuman raging beast had locked what was left of me in a cold, dark, damp place not unlike a butcher's meat locker.

I tried to think and reason my way out of this place, but every time I tried to pull myself up I could feel the steeply sloped sides of the loose gravel lined conical pit that I was in, give way and slide back down with me. Burying me to the neck again. The more I struggled, the farther down I slid, the more terrified I became.

I cried uncontrollably for 2 weeks. I contemplated suicide. Just one quick pull of the Trigger and that 9mm slug would do its job. I wouldn't even feel it. I would be with her again. I'd go outside, so there wouldn't be a mess to clean up in the office.

This thought pattern frightened me as much as the pain I was feeling had hurt me. Scared, feeling alone and lost, I knew I had to do something and I knew it had to do with God.

Although I have prayed every day for the last 30 years I still had to remove that well-known layer of dust from the Bible that I had received as a gift equally long ago. How often I had walked past it thinking I should really read and understand that book more.

I dusted it off and read the book of Job. At last, I felt some peace, even though it was short lived, it was peace. It was the Holy Spirit doing his work. Although I did not know what to call it at the time. I had felt that peace many times before in my life. If I could only feel that way all of the time. Oh, well.

The pain and persistent agony and despair returned.

Like a child who has scrapped his knee I turned to my dear mother in the hopes that she could provide some insight based on her years of wisdom and experience. At 55 years of age, here I was, the strong and independent one, leaning on his 85 year old mother. I had never been to this place of desperation before and had to find a way out before it destroyed me.

Mom offered to arrange a meeting with the Pastor at her place of residence, Trinity Village. That Pastor was Randy Frank.

Among other Spiritual support, Randy referred me to FaithWalkers, the Saturday morning Bible Study at Hillpoint Church led by Richard Cobb. Maybe this was the starting point that I was looking for.

The Study Topic at Faithwalkers over the course of the next few months was Knowing, Experiencing, and Nurturing a relationship with the Holy Spirit.

Wow, that is what you call that thing that I was feeling inside. That thing that gave me peace, some of the time. And, now here's the good part, you could develop that further. You could even get to know God better. In fact that is what he wants you to do and he reveals himself to you when you seek him.

I couldn't believe it. It seemed too simple to be true. Suddenly I was aware that the whole room that I was in was alive with the Holy Spirit. It was palpable, I could feel it and you could almost reach out and touch it. And all of the other guys in there were feeling it too. I gave silent thanks to God that he existed and that he had guided me to this place.

Over the course of the next six months, through diligent study and prayer, I was able to get to the point of no pain about half of the time. My new relationship with and understanding of the Holy Spirit would bring me peace, but then my human mind would begin to think, well what about the future, what am I to do now? I do not want to be alone the rest of my life God. That thought process raised my anxiety level to the point that the pain would again return to continue its perfect torture of my pulverized inner being.

OK God that's it. I give up. I cannot do this. I am not strong enough. Every time I try, it works for awhile, and then it all collapses again. I am done. No more. I am finished with it. I give my life to you, total surrender. I pray that you either take me home to you or fix the pain. I am OK with whatever you decide to do, but please do it soon, I can't bear it any longer.

The next Saturday was October 14. As part of the conclusion of our study of the power of the Holy Spirit an offer was made to the group that anyone who wished to, could receive a Baptism of the Spirit that would be conducted on an individual basis following the session.

Well, that sounded like one heck of a good idea to me.

My new Brothers in Christ, Mike Casey and Bill Blatz took me to a private area and seated me on a folding metal chair and stood over me. They both placed their hands on my shoulders. Mike had brought out a small bottle of oil and applied a small drop to my head with his hand. Bill was speaking in tongues and Mike was interpreting the message. Tears began pouring from my eyes. My body began to shake uncontrollably. I could hear myself groaning, was that me?

From the inside of my closed eyelids I could see what looked like the glowing outline of a hand reach slowly and most gently into me from above my head. It continued down to where my aching heart was. That hand then simply rose up through my heart and with it went the horrible physical pain that I could not shake. Although I could not see a face connected to that hand, I am most certain that it was the hand of Jesus reaching in and healing me with his wonderful mercy and love.

While it is only two months later and I still struggle with the profound emotions of the situation, the intolerable physical pain has not returned, thank you GOD.

The Holy Spirit provides the words to say and what actions to take whenever God wants me to do his will. It is like the River of Living Water that is promised to us as believers, to share the truth with others. I often listen to my voice, from a place somewhat removed, knowing that it is not me thinking and providing the words, but the Holy Spirit using me as a vessel for Gods purpose. What more could anyone hope for?

Scott Collins