

# Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

*Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ*

March 17, 2018

## Mary's Testimony

Years ago a woman named Mary came to us who had been a lifelong alcohol and drug abuser. Mary was completely possessed by unclean spirits to the extent that if she even attempted to call upon the name of Jesus her throat would swell up and choke off the words. The demons would speak through her at times and both threatened and attempted to cause her to take her own life. In the presence of God she would go into a "stone trance" and be unmovable for up to twenty minutes at a time. What astounded us was that in this condition Mary had been a platform musician at multiple "Spirit-filled" churches and had been assured that she was both saved and filled with the Spirit of God.

A year before she came to us Mary entered a major Christian treatment institution for drug and alcohol abuse. In this "Christian" rehab her Hindu psychiatrist used scripture as the basis for his treatment. The foundation scripture was Jesus' words "*You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.*" John 8:32. Mary was told "*the truth*" that would make her free was the truth about herself. So ...under the covering of scripture ...in a "Christian" rehab institution ...with a Hindu psychiatrist ...she was indoctrinated against every precept of the gospel of Jesus Christ. She did not believe the Bible was the word of God neither did she accept that Jesus was the Son of God.

After over one-hundred thousand dollars of insurance money was spent on her treatment, she exited the center “dried-out” from alcohol and drugs, but still demon possessed, lost, and on her way to hell. I have no natural explanation of why she ended up at Calvary Outreach Church other than she said she had a dream that she would be delivered there. Mary would sit in service after service of gospel preaching and then argue against the things she was hearing, but ...she kept coming.

In a revival Campmeeting, a visiting pastor from Kansas ministered on broken cisterns. God had said *“For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.”* Jeremiah 2:13. Something gripped Mary in this service and she began to weep uncontrollably. She realized she had been drinking from a “religious mud-hole” ...a *“broken cistern,”* but they had convinced her it was the fountain of God. I asked her if she was now ready for Jesus Christ, but Mary refused, saying, “I just cannot see that.”

Mary’s world began to fall apart. Cravings for alcohol rushed in and thoughts of suicide began to fill her thoughts, but ...she kept coming and listening. Three weeks passed and one Sunday morning Brother Leroy Surface preached on the work of the cross of Christ. It was a wonderful service, but nothing extraordinary seemed to take place.

The following day Mary showed up at Brother and Sister Surface’s home to speak with them. She said, “Leroy, something happened to me while you were preaching yesterday.” What was

that?" he asked. "Well it felt physical, but I do not believe it was. While you were preaching something leaped inside of me and I knew I believed!" Being a little skeptical, Brother Surface asked, "What did you believe, Mary?" She answered, "I knew I believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. I believe He died on the cross for my sins, was buried, and raised again on the third day. I knew that I was crucified with Him, buried with Him, and raised again with Him in newness of life. I knew that I am saved, and **I know that I am free!**

Through simple gospel preaching, without anyone laying hands on her, she was instantly delivered from every unclean spirit and the power and presence of sin. In that moment she was born of the Spirit of God, never to desire, seek, or need alcohol, drugs, or any such thing again. Her whole life became "*Jesus Christ and Him crucified.*" 1 Corinthians 2:2. She became a great light to everyone she met until the Lord took her home almost a decade later.

Before she passed she moved to a northern state to be closer to family, yet continually sharing the gospel of Christ. The day Mary died family and friends lined up to speak to her knowing this would be the last time they would ever hear her voice in this world. To each person that came she spoke of Jesus and the gospel of his great salvation. When her pastor entered, she looked upon him and said, "It's all about the gospel! Preach the truth of the gospel! At the funeral the pastor told Brother Surface "I only pray that when my time comes I can die like she died." Brother Surface responded, "If you will

believe the gospel she believed, then you will die like she died, with the same grace she died with.”

The truth that made Mary free was not a truth about herself. It was the simple truth of who Christ is, what he came into the world to accomplish, and that he finished it all upon the cross for everyone who will believe *“the truth.”* Believe that Jesus IS the eternal Christ, the Son of God, who came into the world *“to make an end of sins, make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness.”* Daniel 9:24-25. Believe that upon his cross he destroyed your *“body of sin”* Romans 6:6 to deliver you from sin’s power and presence both upon and within you. This is the truth that Jesus said *“shall make you free!”*