

At the age of 34, in 1971, my husband of 14 years decided he needed to leave me for someone else. I was terrified to be a single mother. My daughters were 9 and 11 and my mother was dying of cancer.

My marriage had been terrible. I knew my husband was involved with his secretary. He never came home until late. I knew about the young girl as well. It was so bad that we actually began to take turns "going out".

I had started working for a paramedical company the year before the divorce. There were two nurses in my office. Men from down the hall stopped in to visit. Not too long afterwards we began to close early or stay late and drink beer.

I was really enjoying the company of one man in particular who, of course, was married. Somehow, that made me feel safe. He started saying things to me I had never heard before. He told me how neat and beautiful I was. He loved my personality and enjoyed the fact that I was a bit of a hippy. I had never had anyone enjoy my "flair" before.

I was getting emotionally involved with Don. He told me not to get a divorce because of him. I told him I wanted out for my sanity. When the divorce was set Don and I had no boundaries.

I had 2 miscarriages 5 years before and wanted another child, but could not get pregnant. I thought I was sterile.

Don and I met each and every day at lunchtime. I knew immediately I was pregnant. When I first told him his first response was to find out about an abortion. They were not performed nor were they legal in Texas at the time. I had a friend who was a nurse in Tyler, TX. Her doctor was "run out of town" for performing abortions. He moved to New Mexico where abortion was legal.

I made an appointment with my OB and confirmed my pregnancy. I immediately became very large. This was October of 1972. The doctor did not discuss anything with me concerning abortion. It was as if he didn't care. He knew I was divorced.

I called the nurse in New Mexico. I had to wait at least 6 weeks. I was terrified. I had no one to talk to. I had to do the abortion ASAP. I felt caught and angry with myself for being pregnant. At 6 weeks I looked like I was 4 months pregnant. We have twins in the family. I suspect I was carrying twins.

Don paid for everything...the abortion, the plane ticket...I stayed with my friend- the nurse. I still remember the night I arrived in Albuquerque. We drove 40 miles to Santa Fe. How well I remember that drive...the drinks, dinner and more drinks. At 2 a.m. they decided to go ahead and perform the abortion...I can still see the table and all of the equipment. They even gave me an injection on top of all of the alcohol. Even with all of that I could feel the instrument going inside of me...I knew the moment I killed my baby

or babies. That is all I recall except the nurse putting me in pajamas and into bed at her house.

The next morning I was afraid to move. I carefully moved to the restroom thinking I would be bloody, but nothing was there...of course not...my baby had been vacuumed out of me. I got dressed and walked around Santa Fe as if nothing had happened. I did feel relief. I had felt so trapped and afraid. I was very involved with the PTA at the school my girls attended. We lived in a very upscale neighborhood where I was also involved in Girl Scouts and Brownies. How could I have a baby when everyone knew I was divorced!

When I arrived home—Don met me at the airport. He didn't ever ask me how I was doing or how I felt. I pushed it out of my mind and went on with my life. I would think of my baby every July. Don and I had a five-year affair.

I look back now and see all of the anger, rage, depression, suicide attempts, alcohol, drugs, food and men...lots of men...I raged at my daughters...I always had feelings of low self esteem...I ALWAYS felt "less than"...I really hated myself. I never thought any of it could be the result of the abortion.

The day my husband left I told God to get out of my life. I continued my destructive behavior. I soon dated a doctor. His friend did a tubaligation on me...no more pregnancies...I felt empty. The next twelve years I filled my self with rage, alcohol and drugs.

I was at the end of the road...either I die or get help. I joined A-A. There I met God. I have been sober for 24 years. I have felt like this is only good thing I have done with my life until about 2 months ago...

I had moved to Atlanta to live with my daughter, her husband and my grand daughter. It was a big mistake. I stayed 2 years and knew I must come back to Texas and the home I had leased out. September 28 I moved from Atlanta and really did not have a place to go until my house was ready. My sister did not return my frantic phone calls. My brother was very hateful to me. Now I realize this was God's plan.

I called one of my dearest friends, LaVon, and asked if I could stay with she and Hugh for 4 weeks. She opened her arms and her home to me. I moved in with my cat. As soon as I crossed into Texas I started looking for KCBI, the Christian radio station. LaVon had always prayed for me...even when I told her not to. When I walked into LaVon's home I was surrounded by Christian music, books, pictures, teaching tapes... and lots of love. I went to church with them the following Sunday. The minute I walked in I knew God wanted me there.

About 3 weeks later Bob and Teresa were at Ovilla Road Baptist Church to sing and speak. Teresa sang and then spoke about Gilead, abortion and the memorial to the unborn. Bob started his talk and it was like he was reading my mind. I believed in God,

Jesus and the Holy Spirit, but I could not feel anything in my heart. Bob said something about being stuck...not able to continue down the road...All of a sudden I started crying and shaking. I had to talk to Teresa. As soon as church was over I went to Teresa and told her about my abortion. I had NEVER told anyone. It was the first I had ever spoken of it in 34 years. I am 69 years old. No wonder I couldn't feel the love of God. I had shut down my emotions so that I wouldn't feel the pain of my abortion.

I gave Teresa my phone number...early Monday morning I received a call from her. I continued to share that not only had I killed my baby, but also I have had 7 grandchildren killed! I am responsible for taking each of my girls to get abortions...I also paid for 2 of the abortions.

Teresa invited me to The Abiding Place the following week... after about a 2-hour phone conversation and continuous crying...the dam opened. I spent 3 days with Teresa pouring out my heart. It was like my heart opened up and I felt joy and forgiveness from God. I was able to forgive myself. I began to understand that even my babies had forgiven me. Part of the healing process is naming your child. That same afternoon I felt like God gave me the names Benjamin Zachariah and Joseph Alan. I feel stronger about Benjamin...I cannot explain... I now understand these lives carry value, meaning and purpose. Every aborted child does. God has used these children to bring me to Himself.

I have had so many blessings and miracles since that time. I know God is in my life, I am happy...really happy...and peaceful...and there is no fear...NO ANGER!

Just two weeks ago I attended a Post Abortion Recovery Retreat at The Abiding Place. Rhonda Arias from Oil of Joy for Mourning was there. She has a prison ministry where she helps women toward healing from their abortions. She is seeing hundreds of incarcerated women healed from abortion. During that weekend I was able to forgive and release Don. It was hard at first. The fact that he didn't really love or care for me was huge. I was able to forgive him because God has forgiven me of so much. The weight of unforgiveness had held me back too long. I was released as I released Don.

I am not sure what all God has planned and prepared for my life. I do know it will be something wonderful. I am so in love with Jesus Christ. I can't begin to tell you how happy and peaceful my heart still is today. I do know that God wants me to minister healing to grandmothers who have lost babies to abortion. Several grandmothers have come to Gilead for such healing...so much ministry is needed in this area. What seems like a "quick fix" and a "way out" is really death and destruction...not just for the baby, but also for the women who abort God's purpose for their lives because of guilt and shame.

Jesus heals and brings back to life everything that was destroyed. I know I will be of use to Jesus. I know at 69 years of age my life is full of His purpose...His plans.... His peace...His power...His presence...because He has healed and restored me.

Just call me – Healed! N